

Town of Princeton Environmental Action Committee (EAC)

Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2020

Meeting called to order at 7:10pm

Committee members present (via remote):

Corey Burnham-Howard (CBH), Claire Golding (GC), Phil Gott (PG), Chris Samoiloff (CS), Phoebe Moore (PM), Charlie Cary (CC)

Public Comment: None. Helga Lyons (HL) present as liaison from Advisory Committee.

Review & Approve Minutes from October 21, 2020 Meeting:

- EAC members briefly discuss the draft meeting minutes and offer minor edits.
 - o **MOTION** to accept as amended with minor edits
Motion: CC; 2d: CS; Vote: 6-0

Revise EAC Meeting Schedule

- CBH is now an alternate member of the Planning Board, which meets on the 1st and 3d Wednesday of each month. She inquired whether, to help her avoid conflicts, the EAC members might consider meeting on a different usual day than the current 3d Wednesday of each month.
 - o EAC members discuss availability. All agree to a new schedule of EAC meetings on the 3rd Thursday of each month.

Green Communities Designation Application

- CBH provided update.
 - o Sarah Adams from Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) is finalizing Energy Reduction Plan (ERP). Kelly Brown from the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has agreed to give the ERP a preliminary review and will do so in the coming week.
 - **ACTION:** CBH will forward most recent draft of ERP to EAC members.
 - o CBH has drafted Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Policy (FEVP) for Selectboard approval, and sent it to Selectboard.
 - o CBH expects that ERP and FEVP will be presented to the Selectboard for their approval/adoption at a special November 24, 2020 meeting. CBH will introduce the discussion, and Sarah Adams will be available to present and answer questions.
 - o CBH explained that the deadline for Green Community Designation applications are now being accepted on rolling basis through December 30, 2020, and once Selectboard approves the ERP and FEVP, Sarah Adams will submit the application to DOER.
- Helga Lyons and PG expressed concern about not including the current Public Safety Building in the ERP/audit. CBH explained that because the building is anticipated to be decommissioned within the next 5 years, DOER and CMRPC recommended not performing an audit on the building or including the building in the ERP's identified energy-reduction actions.

Municipal Vulnerability Planning (MVP) Program

- PG provided update.
 - o Three virtual two-hour MVP workshops have been completed. CMRPC will now make a summary of the matrices compiled from each working "table" of participants and will

- send a survey to participants to “vote” and prioritize identified hazards, vulnerabilities, and action items.
 - The final MVP report is expected in April 2021.
- Helga Lyons asked about what hazards were identified. PG answered that identified climate-related hazards in Princeton included storms/ice/flooding/drought/fire/wind.

Princeton Municipal Light Department (PMLD)

- PG provided update.
 - A new manager was hired and began on 11/16.
 - A fiber optic line has been connected to the windmills but Charter seems unable to provide an interface to communicate with the equipment.
 - PMLD sales of electricity have increased 135,000 kwh in the past year—which may be likely due to work-from-home and new buildings in town)

Waste and Recycling

- CG provided update.
 - The Waste and Recycling Committee (WRC) plans to meet with 5 different haulers one time per week in December to get an understanding of costs and answers to other questions in preparation for preparing a Request for Proposals for haulers.
 - The WRC expects a proposed WR Plan Summary to be sent in the January Town Census, the responses to which the WRC hopes will help to gauge initial participation levels and plan preferences.
 - The WRC’s next meeting is 11/24 at 9a.
- PG asked what if residents don’t want to participate in the plan, and CG said that they will have an option not to join and to keep their own hauler. CG explained that the plan likely won’t pass if residents are forced to join, so the WRC is working to make the plan appealing such that residents will choose to participate.
- PM asked about whether the WRC is factoring the cost of bin returns to current haulers. CG acknowledged those costs would be on residents.
- Helga Lyons noted that she attended a presentation by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, which explained facts about the need to reduce waste.

Communications Updates

- CS provided updates.
 - The November issue of the EAC Newsletter: “The Green News” was published (containing PG’s article on fuel)
 - The Town News issued notice on the Newsletter publication and how to subscribe to EAC newsletters.
 - PG posted the article on LinkedIn and it has received over 300 views
- CS suggested that future Newsletters feature articles with the writer (EAC member) bios
- With regard to EAC articles in the Council on Aging (COA) Newsletter, there is no current director and no current COA newsletter.
- The EAC December Newsletter will include updates for each of the ongoing EAC- EAP action items.
 - **ACTION:** Each EAC member provide update on their ongoing action item to CS by 11/30.
- CS suggested the topic for the January Newsletter be on the WPI Wood Project. CC will consider.
 - This prompted discussion on issue raised by PG as to 50 trees cut on Beaman Rd. CC

will look into what happened to all of the wood.

EAC Webpage Updates

- CS provided updates.
 - o CS will change the noted EAC meeting time on the webpage.
 - o CS noted that she needs to communicate with the Town Clerk about webpage to-do action items.
 - o CS noted that WRC blurb can be linked to WRC webpage.
 - o CS asks CG, PG, and CBH to update their action item sections (e.g., WRC, MVP, and Green Communities) and provide those updates to her so that she can update relevant EAC webpage sections
 - **ACTION:** CG, PG, and CBH to provide action item updates to CS for webpage update.

WPI Project Updates

- CC provided updates.
 - o CC has meet with 4 WPI students with regard to their project exploring the use of available wood as fuel. CC noted the students' enthusiasm, and noted that the students need additional educational background on the topic.
 - CG noted that typically the WPI projects involve the first 7 weeks of researching information and the next 7 weeks collecting information/data.
- CG reported that, starting in January, she may also likely work with WPI on another project related to a possible Town Lighting Ordinance. CBH offered her interest in helping.

LCC Grant Opportunities

- CBH suggested that the EAC consider applying for a Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant through the Princeton Cultural Council (PCC). CBH noted that the grants can be used to sponsor science-related education. CBH noted that the grant application deadline is 12/14/2020.
 - o The EAC members briefly discussed ideas as to what the EAC might apply for a grant, including speakers, marketing, or other education/communication.
 - o **MOTION:** Motion to authorize CBH, CS, and CC to draft an EAC application for a PCC grant.
 - Motion: CG; 2d: PM; Vote: 6-0
 - o **ACTION:** CBH to send the PCC grant information to all EAC members.
 - o **ACTION:** CBH to schedule meeting with CC and CS to discuss proposed PCC grant application.

Other Business:

- CS raised the topic of if and when the EAC should go before the Selectboard with any new priority action items from the Environmental Action Plan (EAP).
 - o CBH suggested this might be good to prepare for a Selectboard January agenda.
- As suggested and requested by CC, CBH is working to get 6-10 more hard copies of the EAP printed for circulation to town residents.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting (December 17, 2020 at 7p via online forum)

- Public Comment
- Review and Approve Minutes of November 16, 2020
- Green Communities Designation Application Updates
- MVP Updates

- PMLD Updates
- Waste and Recycling Updates
- Communications Updates
- EAC Town Webpage Updates
- WPI Project Updates
- LCC Grant Opportunities Updates
- Agenda items for Next Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

MOTION to adjourn.

Motion: PG; 2d: CS; Vote: 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Corey Burnham-Howard