

# Princeton Environmental Action Committee (EAC) Meeting Minutes

## April 4, 2018

**Meeting called to order** at 7:02pm

*Committee members present:*

Claire Golding (CG), Corey Burnham-Howard (CBH), Brett Gibbs (BG), Phil Gott (PG), Phoebe Moore (PM), Chris Samoiloff (CS)

*Not present:*

Michael Knapp (MK)

**Public Comment:** none

### **Review and approve minutes of 3/19/18 meeting**

*Adjustments:*

- Changed date from 3/21/18 to 3/19/18 (CG)
- Minor word change (CS)

VOTE: CBH moved; PM seconded; passed 6-0

### **Report back on action items**

*PMLD April Meeting (CG):*

- Regarding EAC presenting survey results to PMLD: there is a conflict on the proposed May date, so CG and PM will give an energy-focused presentation of the survey results at the June 13th PMLD meeting. . That later date allows time to include some recommended actions, if applicable.

*Green Communities presentation inquiries and summary of Green Communities process (CBH):*

- CBH reached out to Kelly Brown and Rutland. She heard back from Kelly Brown (KB) (Green Community of Central MA liaison). She will follow up with Rutland.
- Inquired about the best time for EAC to present information re: Green Community status to Select Board, and when KB should present to Select Board. At least 3 components of the process require town meeting vote - KB suggests after the May 2018 elections because there will be a new Select Board.
- Information on becoming a Green Community can be put in the Environmental Action Plan (EAP).
- The Town needs to do the application but CBH anticipates the EAC will be supporting this effort, not the Town, and that we can get a preliminary review of the application from another Green Community.
- The Planning Board needs to get involved in the as-of-right siting for solar/wind because it requires a change in the bylaws. CBH has written by-laws before and can help draft these.
- There was a discussion of "as of right" and what that entails, that it can be overlaid on an industrial area, and that restrictions can be made. There was a note that our master plan has a lot to do with natural beauty and that restrictions can be made to hide solar panels/windmills out of sight. We can talk to other communities about what they did in regards to this requirement and what restrictions can be allowed.
- Members discussed whether the Plan should be written as a kind of marketing piece to encourage the town to accept EAC recommendations. Also discussed were ways to anticipate concerns and reach voters about the Green Communities designation. PM suggested an F.A.Q. to answer people's questions. CG proposed doing what was done for the survey and standing out at the post office handing out information and answering questions.
- CBH believes criterion 3 (establishing an energy use baseline and adopting an energy reduction plan [ERP]) will be the most involved but that there are lots of tools and examples out there we can make use of.
- It was suggested that the sooner we approach the Select Board, the better, with new buildings possibly in the works. We should do the energy audits now on the existing buildings to start to meet the GHG emissions reduction requirements.
- ERP (Energy Reduction Plan) would be an appropriate task for EAC to handle.
- CG proposed that we reach out to experts to help speed up the process, which may cost money. She speculated that there may be grants available for hiring experts.
- For criterion #4 (purchasing fuel efficient vehicles for municipal use), most of our town vehicles will be

exempt. CG found out from the MA Climate Action Network (MCAN) that there is a MA Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (EVIP) to help municipalities buy an electric car and charging station at substantial discounts.

- For criterion #5 (adopting the Stretch Code), CBH mentioned that as of 2017 there is not much difference between the existing building code and the Stretch Code. It could cost about \$3,000 more to build a residence following the Stretch Code, but the increase could be paid off within the first year from the energy savings, according to information Phil has collected.
- CBH pointed out that 8 out of the 10 energy goals listed by the EAC will be achieved by Princeton becoming a Green Community. 210 out of 351 communities in MA are already designated as Green Communities and they are saving money. And the EAC will be eligible to apply for additional grants after gaining Green Community status and receiving its first grant.

#### *Lawn Care & Pesticide Fact Sheet:*

- CS said that she reached out to the Town Clerk, Lynne Grettum, and the Parks & Rec director, Hollie Lucht, for information on how the town maintained public spaces such as lawns / playing fields, and to Nate Grigos of Roots Rock to learn how organic maintenance might differ. In the process found out that the town tried to use organics when possible.
- CS created a first draft of the fact sheet for everyone to review. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- There was a discussion of how to list the resources – bit.ly links vs. putting complete links on the EAC resources web page (part of the Town website) with a QR code for that web page on the fact sheet. CS to review the resource web page and the resources on the fact sheet and determine best course of action. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- PG suggesting adding “prepared by Princeton’s Environmental Action Committee” to the fact sheet.
- PG/BG suggested adding a link to the UMASS Amherst extension service for soil testing.

#### *Facilities Steering Committee - EAC on agenda?:*

- CBH reached out, via email, to Karen Cruise (KC), chairperson of the Facilities Steering Committee. KC felt the assistance we proposed is premature and would be more appropriate for a building committee (still to be formed). KC suggested that any building committee would perhaps want an EAC liaison for helping with an RFQ.

#### **Review CG proposed EAP structure**

- There was a bit of back and forth on what was proposed and some adjustments, with the conclusion that some of this will be clarified as we start to populate the sections of the plan. CG will take the individual work PG has already done and map it to what she has proposed to see how this structure will work. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- CG would want to separate short-term and long-term goals.
- There was some discussion on where to put a cost/benefit scale and the suggestion of using symbols to represent such concepts as economic benefits, greenhouse gas reduction, public support, health, and affordability. Tacoma, Washington’s EAP was cited as an example of this. We can see where using such symbols would make sense as we start writing the plan.
- We will change Residents to Residents/Businesses (or Residence/Commercial) in the “How to Use” section.
- Some suggestions for the Appendix - list of abbreviations, list of who we interview, methodologies/EAC process.
- How to handle footnotes to be determined.
- It is important to seek multiple sources for the same information for anything that goes into the plan.

#### **Refine deadline/schedule for EAP draft**

- CG and CBH to come up with a proposed schedule - CBH will make a first stab at proposed deadlines and send to CG **[ACTION ITEM]**
- Everyone to identify strategies under each subgroup/category to bring to next meeting **[ACTION ITEM]**, where we will assign topic areas and tasks and map out a schedule for research / drafts.

#### **Update on EAP progress**

- BG handed out the work he’s done so far on Land Use

- All will continue to work on research/writing. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- CBH will resend her earlier documents (*EAC Outline* and *Regulations, Laws, and other Relevant Resources*) along with a list of EAP plans other communities have done. **[ACTION ITEM]**

**Brainstorm ENERGY section of EAP:** This agenda item was tabled

**May 2 meeting venue:** meet at Crocker House

**Select Board Public Participation Policy** (additional agenda item)

- PG moved to *implement the Select Board's public participation policy as and when it may be needed in our meetings.*
- CG seconded

VOTE: passed 6-0

**Summary of action items**

- *All:* Review Natural Lawn Care & Pest Control fact sheet and send feedback to CS
- *CS:* determine the best way to list resource links
- *CG:* plug Phil's EAP work into the new proposed outline
- *CG & CBH:* come up with a proposed schedule
- *All:* identify strategies under the subgroups you are in and bring to the next meeting
- *All:* continue individual work on research areas
- *CBH:* re-send her earlier documents (EAC outline; Laws, Regulations, Resources) and a list of EAP plans other communities have done

**Next Meeting Agenda**

- Public comment period
- Review and approve minutes of 4/4/18
- Sheepfest preparations
- Review proposed EAP topics and discuss/prepare schedule

**Meeting Adjourned** at 8:51pm

VOTE: PM called to adjourn; PG seconded; passed 6-0

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Samoiloff