



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

ASHLAND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, February 15, 2021

Time: 7:00pm ET

Location: Zoom Video Call

Present:

- Ash Ratanchandani – Chair
- Rob Moolenbeek – Vice Chair
- Kevin Mullins – Clerk
- Margy Gassel – Member
- Chuck Lidz - Member
- Matt Marshquist – Member
- Mark Moniz- Member
- Margaret Musoke - Associate Member
- Mark Dassoni - Resident
- Florence Seidell – Resident

Citizen Participation:

- Mark Dassoni shared positive feedback to new structure of committee and information sharing.

Sustainability Coordinator Updates:

- **2021 Green Communities:**
 - Final closeout reports are complete for 2020 projects
 - Future projects tackled will be an open discussion
 - Library lighting identified as a potential option (High School and Middle School large users of energy)
 - Block 1/Spring deadline for applications is April 9th
 - Block 2/Fall deadline for applications is October 8th
 - Note: Program only eligible for 1 of 2 blocks
- **Solar + Clean heat challenge**
 - We received sign off internally from legal to start the program as planned.

- Natick received approval to participate in the program.
- Framingham also received approval to proceed from their City Solicitor; Last step is Mayor's Office signing off.
- Final step: Final review of documents before RFP release.
- ***Municipal Aggregation Program***
 - MA DPU will be holding a hearing on our proposed electrical supply optional opt in for 100% class 1 RECs
 - Date: Wednesday Feb 24th beginning at 2:30PM
 - Colonial Power to host our hearing in addition to several other municipalities' aggregation programs.
- ***MAPC Planning Assistance Grant***
 - Frank reached out to MAPC to see when our planning project for quantifying climate change mitigation strategies will start; Awaiting reply

Core Committee Update

- ***Priorities for Sustainability Committee for 2021 and beyond***
 - Ash walked through core project list from what he, Rob, and Matt compiled (includes past project list and overlap against MPAC recommendations) as well as the MAPC Net Zero playbook and Sierra Club and CPEC slides
 - Group discussion commenced on appropriate way to determine committee priorities – clear focus on how to make 2021 action oriented with clear deliverables, owners, and overall accountability.
 - Group discussed whether to build own priority list, use MPAC's or use MPAC as framework to be customized for our unique needs
 - After careful deliberation, all present agreed to use MPAC as framework and customize it for Ashland's specific needs, learnings, and opportunities
 - Learnings/ideas that surfaced during discussion:
 - The state needs to adopt stretch zero goal – towns need to approve implementing it (through town meeting vote)
 - For anything related to zoning and planning, wait for winter report
 - Need to figure out what advocacy looks like to help Massachusetts (for state initiatives)
 - Need to decide what the town must own and what the committee owns (how do you sell it to key people); Need to get support up front from Select Board and Michael Herbert for certain initiatives - Florence comments
 - Opportunities to more fully leverage MassSave and Solar programs
 - Framingham has a new program/partnership with MassSave (how can we learn more)

- We are underway with Complete streets program – DPW implementing
 - How can we partner with dealerships for deals for residents (such as Nissan, Chevy EV, etc.)
 - Frank looking at financing and options to put solar on two new buildings (Mindess and Public Safety)
 - Idea around having a grassroots citizens roundtable – Mark D.
 - Wording in Ashland newsletter around Class 1 Rec program does not properly reflect opportunities at stake (in order to create urgency for residents around these opportunities)
 - Commercial composting (idea from Margy)
- **Massachusetts climate policy influencing**
 - Committee reviewed letter outlining joint comments from “MetroWest Communities regarding the Interim Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2030”
 - Committee approved signing letter on behalf of entire committee.

Upcoming Events

- MA DPU will be holding a hearing on our proposed electrical supply optional opt in for 100% class 1 RECs
 - Event date is Wednesday Feb 24th beginning at 2:30PM
 - Colonial Power to host our hearing in addition to several other municipalities’ aggregation programs; Colonial Power will be speaking on our behalf at this meeting.
 - <https://zoom.us/j/97904726304> to attend.
 - If you anticipate providing comments via Zoom during the public hearing, please send an email by close of business (5:00 p.m.) on Monday, February 22, 2021, to katherine.goyette@mass.gov with your name, email address, and mailing address.
- MCAN events in Feb
 - Feb 16 - [Net Zero Pathways Webinar](#) - Net Zero Pathways and Opportunities under the Biden-Harris Administration: Prospects for Community Climate Action
 - **Feb 17** - [Social Media for Advocates](#)

MEETING ACTIONS

- Ash to put together individual spreadsheets for each committee member with list of priorities – each member to add their name to 3 projects they are passionate about (aim is to deliver ownership and accountability)
- Ash to reach out to Kevin regarding Sustainability Committee marketing plan based on priorities (Matt to help as need on visuals)

- Committee expressed desired to learn about Natick's strategy and sustainability program and will ask Frank for introduction (Margy put Natick's action plan in Net Zero folder as learning opportunity)

Items Discussion for 2/15 meeting:

- Priorities for Sustainability Committee for 2021 and beyond (based on committee selections)
- Potential of reaching out to Sierra Club about potential learnings from recommended actions
- Mark to share more detail about NEAP.org official sponsorship of Heat Smart program

Approve Meeting Minutes: Minutes from February 1, 2021 approved by Committee members.

Meeting adjourned at shortly at 8:58pm ET