



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

ASHLAND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, May 24, 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
- Frank Nakashian (S. Coordinator)
- Cara Camerato Hulme – Resident
- Mark Dassoni – Resident
- Florence Seidell – Resident

❖ **NetZero Plan Progress Updates**

- Ash to work on a proposed format for the Net Zero plan (aim is for there to be something to react to at the June 7th meeting)

❖ **Other Business/Updates**

- **Corner Spot Business Networking event (and more)**
 - Corner spot Business networking event – June 10 5:30 -7:00PM
 - Committee discussed whether we should participate, what it could look like, and whether individuals would be available
 - Frank/Kevin to connect with Beth on potential fit for event. Frank to also discuss with Beth the idea of doing a future event at Corner Spot around the Sustainability Committee's key initiatives like the solar program (and intersection with business community)

- Cara showed a poster she designed to help get people engaged with Committee and initiatives
- Discussion of this led to conversation around town website (Kevin and Frank to confirm whether Kevin can get access)

❖ **Solar + Clean Heat Challenge (update from Frank)**

- “Tentatively” finalized vendor selection and sent award email letters
- Before Program can “go live,” Natick has a Select Board meeting on 6/2/21 to sign the Contract Letter Agreement document.
- Once Contract Letter Agreement is signed, then the program can be advertised
- Meet the Installer video meeting tentatively for 6/17/21
- Draft volunteer outreach guide and a draft marketing plan created- covers all volunteer opportunities, highlights marketing strategies and information needed to do these and plan for running the program.
- Website is coming together (which Frank showed) and logo created – www.metrowestcleanenergy.com
- Next steps to meet with vendors this week and discuss draft marketing strategy and Meet the Installer Event
- Discussion of this included having
 - Running calendar of events
 - Photo of residents for the site
 - Committee reviewed Natick-drafted marketing plan at high level - questions around what we can use (signs, etc). It was noted that signs/banners are not allowed on public property in Ashland
 - There are questions around what vendors will do
 - Quick discussion of potential use of town’s electric signs (per Rob handed over from police dept to DPW so may not be viable option)
 - June 12th start of Ashland Farmer’s market (likely can do a day during summer) – possibly more frequent if outside of Farmer’s Market. Matt noted that it could be a good place to seek solar coaches
 - Mark mentioned idea of setting up table at summer concert series (4x this summer)
- A few highlights from reviewed marketing plan:
 - Drive residents to website to sign up for more info and site assessment
 - Feature information on installers and technology
 - Feature case studies
 - Connect residents to local examples, from trusted sources
 - Host weekly open houses across four communities by volunteers (virtual and in-person, as allowable)
 - Provide coaching services, as needed
 - Host technology 101 meetings with installers, separate from kick-off meeting
 - Feature relatable case studies on website

- Additional discussion items related to program:
 - Contract is for minimum of 6 months (max 10 months)
 - Frank to coordinate call with Jillian/Natick about marketing plans (Initial call on Tues at 2pm with Frank, Ash, Rob, Kevin)

- Frank showed volunteer, highlights include:
 - Outreach Activity #1. Creation of MetroWest Solar and Clean Heat Challenge website for the 4 communities (Ashland, Holliston, Framingham, & Natick) metrowestcleanenergy.com
 - Outreach Activity #2. Marketing the Program by creating newsletter, flyers, website content
 - Outreach Activity #3. Creating video interviews with volunteers
 - Outreach Activity #4. Clean energy open houses
 - Outreach Activity #5. Advertising the Program at Outdoor Events such as Farmers Markets by vendors and volunteers
 - Outreach Activity #6. Share your solar pv and/or heat pump experience with others
 - Outreach Activity #7. Help residents evaluate vendor proposals

- ❖ Additional Committee Business Items:
 - New building on 126 (no mention of sustainability or solar capabilities during the hearing).
 - Committee needs to engage Planning Board to influence (potentially share general questions they should be asking)

- ❖ **Approve Meeting Minutes:** Minutes from May 10th, 2021 approved by Committee members.

Meeting adjourned a few minutes before 9pm ET