

Minutes for 10/11/22 Energy and Climate Action Committee

Present at the meeting: Michael DeChiara, Miriam DeFant, Gail Fleischaker, Leslie Cerier, Nate Heard

Not Present: Zoe Weizenbaum, Graeme Sephton

7:00 Agenda review; confirm minute-taker

Leslie will take minutes

Public comments

None

Planning & Communications re: Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) and Nov. 9 event

Is November 9th the right time to discuss aggregation for our town, the Community Choice Aggregation?

Miriam reported that Leverett Connect in their email message board group said that Leverett CCA rates just doubled. We discussed what that could mean for our town.

Regarding discussing aggregates at a special town meeting November 9, Leslie cautioned the committee not to rush since Marianne Connor will come back to our next meeting on November 8 to educate us on how our town can benefit from true community solar and from solar arrays that did not clear cut the forests to put up ground-mounted solar panels to supply communities with electricity. Leslie suggested that we push back the November 9th informational meeting on CCAs to include community solar as a viable option. To offer the town's people information to make the best choice.

Michael and Gail question costs for PV Squared to look at five different sites in town for a municipally owned community solar for Shutesbury. Hopefully, Marianne Connor will address this issue at our November 8th meeting.

It was discussed whether the town should have solar panels on town buildings.

Gail asked about incentives for solar rebates for individuals and she is willing to post resources on our website for town folks.

Nate left meeting at 7:30

Next steps re: previously discussed initiatives

Sustainable living to reduce energy/carbon footprint:

Zoe and Leslie will continue to work towards helping our town with more sustainable living nature-based solutions to lessen our carbon footprint. Some ideas include: Regenerative Design, townwide composting, lessening or replacing town common lawns with growing food instead of grass.

Michael suggested that as a town committee we need to look at issues from a systems perspective rather than individual responsibility approach.

After attending the Amherst ECAC meeting where much focus was on transportation, Michael suggested ECAC looking at transportation for town residents, including subsidies/grants for Ebikes. Should we be so lucky to have those bikes, where would they be located in town?

Reframing ECAC priorities beyond MVP/HMP - town-wide impact such as transportation v. household level actions

Michael suggested that at the next meeting, the committee confirm ECAC's updated assessment of priorities from MVP/HMP plans. Next steps for committee liaisons. This discussion was postponed given the limited attendance and lack of response to the prioritization form.

New items for consideration

Future presentation on regenerative options

Zoe and Leslie will meet to talk about regenerative design options for the town. Weaving gardens with open spaces. Ending the use of pesticides, insecticides and herbicides. Define regenerative design for this town among other challenging issues as land contamination and preserving open spaces and historical sites.

Committee also talked about recruiting a group of people to write grants for our town. Gail reported that Becky has submitted an application for a Green Communities Competitive Grant to weatherize/insulate Town buildings following recommendations from the recent energy audit. Once those upgrades have been completed, Shutesbury will be eligible to apply for grant funding for

further upgrades to municipal buildings (e.g., heat pumps). FRCOG staff member Alison Gage helped write Becky's grant application as part of FRCOG's service to its municipal members.

And how can we create more walkability in town? Create safety for cyclists on the road. For example, on Leverett Road, there's no bike lane and sometimes traffic goes fast. Committee will talk about the town priorities in another meeting.

There is much to do for this committee to make the right recommendations to the select board on how to make our town more resilient to climate change.

Change of meeting time

Michael reported that after polling committee members, the meeting day would remain on Tuesdays. It was agreed to meet only once a month on the first Tuesday of the month.

Minutes

Gail moved to approve the minutes from September 13, 2020. Leslie seconded it and minutes were approved. Michael DeChiara, aye; Miriam DeFant, aye; Gail Fleischaker, aye; Leslie Cerier, aye.

Motion to adjourn from Gail and Miriam seconded it and the meeting ended at 8:30PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Leslie Cerier