

Minutes of GMC/Net Zero meeting November 22, 2022

Approved at December 15, 2022 meeting

Attending: Brooks Winner, Becky Curran Cutting, Thatcher Kezer, Andrew Petty, John Albright, John Livermore, Joe Kowalik, Eileen Mathieu, members of the public and press: Lynn Bryant, Louise Yarmoff, Elaine Leahy, and Will Dowd from Marblehead Current.

Minutes from Oct 27 were tabled until next meeting.

Sustainability Manager Working Group update:

Alexa, Becky, Thatcher, and Eileen met and the overall idea is that we think such a position should be created; the exact title and who the person reports to needs to be figured out; while it is clear that the position will pay for itself many times over in a few years, budgeting for the first year salary means the position will be funded out of Town funds. This means something else will have to get cut to balance the budget. Becky and Eileen will collate all the information we have on other towns with Sustainability Manager positions, including salary, who they report to, job description. Then Thatcher and Becky will write a job description for Marblehead and Thatcher will present the idea of an energy manager, where in the Town's government the position should be placed, and a job description to the Select Board.

Composting issues:

Elaine Leahy of Sustainable Marblehead asked to be on the agenda and had circulated a letter to members of the GMC explaining the emissions reductions from increasing the town's participation in composting. She urged that we make the recommendations to increase the number of households participating in curbside pickup larger, (currently 700 households out of 8126 households in the town). She suggested that increasing participation be a goal in the net zero plan, and have it be benchmarked, for example, double the participation in 2 years, etc.

She pointed out the methane released from letting food waste go into landfills, and the CO₂ released from being burned with other trash, and that EPA statistics show that food waste is a major contributor to climate change. We currently compost 610 tons of food waste a year through Black Earth.

Andrew Petty raised some issues regarding composting and its release of Methane unless the process is in a "closed vessel". He also pointed out that curbside composting universal for all residents would cost the Town \$735,000. He talked about the state guidelines that are being enforced such as 30% decrease in solid waste by 2030; 50% by 2040; and said any institution/restaurant that does more than a certain amount of food business (by ton) must participate by 2030.

Eileen suggested a working group on compost to make recommendations to the GMC, but this was not acted on at this time.

Net Zero Roadmap review:

we reviewed the revised version of the Roadmap, line by line, including comments and input from individual GMC members; most revisions were accepted. Brooks incorporated these into the draft as we went through it line by line so they will not be itemized here.

A few additions were:

Remove “zero emission municipal fleet policy by a certain date” and have wording be “to set a goal of zero emission from town vehicles where available technology exists”

Eileen advocated for adding specific recommendations in the net zero roadmap that will chart specific steps a) to increase Town Street Tree planting and b) to protect existing mature trees on private property and c) to address heat islands in areas of our town (where there are few trees and lots of asphalt) and the resulting higher emissions from people using more air-conditioning due to the higher temperatures in non-tree-shaded areas. She referenced the Wellesley Climate Action Plan section on Natural Resources, where they outline specific goals and steps to protect the tree canopy. After this discussion, Becky offered to speak with Jon Fobert, the Town tree warden, about what wording he might find helpful.

Plan:

Next meeting December 1, Thursday 3 PM

MAPC will draft an update for Thatcher to share in his “Administrator’s update” to the Selectboard for its Dec 7 meeting.

GMC will pick a date at our Dec 1 meeting for a Listening Session in January to have a Town wide meeting, in person and/or online, to share the draft with the Town, and get feedback.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Mathieu

November 28, 2022