



Town of Barnstable Infrastructure and Energy Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, October 21, 2024, at 5:00PM

This meeting of the Barnstable Infrastructure & Energy Committee is being recorded and will be posted for future viewing on the Town of Barnstable website. Under MGL Chapter 30A Section 20, anyone else desiring to make such a recording or transmission must notify the Chair.

Remote Participation Instructions

The Infrastructure and Energy Committee's Public Hearing will be held by remote participation methods. Real-time public comment can be addressed to the Infrastructure & Energy Committee utilizing the Zoom link and access code for remote access below:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://townofbarnstable-us.zoom.us/j/81185779775?pwd=IWwpaqeEVrQXL3rbEwApx5INmtAB6b.1>

Meeting ID: 811 8577 9775

Passcode: 568500

Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members present: (On Zoom)

Barry Sheingold (Chair), John Solomon, Jane Ward, Rob Wilson; Kristin Terkelsen, Town Council

Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members absent:

Chris Gloninger

Others in Attendance: (On Zoom)

Chris Gadd, Communications Assistant, DPW

Agenda:

Call to Order

Barry Sheingold, Chair, called the October 21, 2024, meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee (IEC) to order at 5:06 PM. The meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee was held remotely.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Barry Sheingold, Chair, moves to discuss the October 7, 2024, meeting minutes. Jane Ward

requested additional time to review the minutes prior to approving. At the conclusion of the October 21, 2024 meeting it was decided that approval of the October 7, 2024 meeting minutes would be voted on at the November 7, 2024 meeting to give committee members additional time to review.

Old Business

a. Green Community Designation

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens the discussion by noting key takeaways from the previous meeting's presentation with Lisa Sullivan from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER). Most notably is the revisions to the Stretch Code to provide more leniency for remodeling. While DOER reviews these changes over the next several months, there is not too much that the committee can do for this initiative.

Jane Ward notes she is paying particularly close attention to the indoor air issue at Barnstable Unified Elementary School and noted that, per Lisa's presentation, the funding for Green communities can be applied to enhance HVAC systems, serving a dual purpose in this scenario.

John Solomon notes the committee is waiting for the updated cost-benefit analysis from DOER and is hopeful that the analysis will be helpful in explaining why the Green Community Designation initiative is worth doing. Barry Sheingold notes that he is uncertain if the updated cost-benefit analysis will come at the same time as the updated regulations or if it is a separate endeavor from the DOER.

b. Food Waste

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens the discussion by asking for updates regarding the Food Waste program. John responds that he has been attempting to schedule a meeting with Thomas McKean and Brian Florence from the Town's Health division, to no avail. There was previous discussion between the Health Division and John indicating a willingness, and potential times, to meet, but those have since passed. John called the Health Division in the afternoon of October 21, 2024, but did not get any response. Barry suggested it may be worthwhile attempting to reach out to the Health Division himself, as it will be a different voice. John agrees with this approach and notes he will keep pushing until he gets through.

John continues his update by asking Chris Gadd about the signage at the Transfer Station. Chris responds that the main issue he saw is a lack of signage stating, "No Plastic Bags". While the directional and identifying signage can be improved, the main issue identified by the Transfer Station staff is plastic contamination and there is no signage there currently to remedy that. Chris notes that he will investigate getting a sign and then work on a social media plan to get the word out. John notes he would also like signage that notes the benefits of composting and encourages people to do it. John disagrees with Chris' assessment of the directional signage as it only gets someone as far as the recycling area of the Transfer Station, not specifically to the food waste shed, which is at the far end of the recycling area. Chris notes that he will inquire about a sign at the front of the recycling area that would provide a diagram and show the various sheds and recycling areas. Jane Ward notes her support for this diagram signage. John notes it would also be good to provide clarifying signage for other recycling areas such

as paper and glass. Chris notes that he is unfamiliar with the scope of the committee but can certainly suggest something to the Transfer Station.

John asks Chris if he could pull up the data that Chris had received from Tracy Regazio, Transfer Station Supervisor. Chris shares the slides, which contain the amount of food waste collected weekly, as reported by the Transfer Station. Chris notes that he does not have the units of data available, but the units are the same across all data. This data was shown in multiple formats, including a line graph of all weeks, a line and bar graph consolidating data into months, and a comparison between usage in July-September of 2023 and the same period in 2024. Chris notes that there is a spike near the holidays. He also notes a trend line showing a slow increase in usage since July of 2023. John notes that there is an opportunity with signage to increase the usage of the food waste program dramatically as the people who already separate their items (i.e. using the other recycling bins/sheds) are already more likely to go through the effort of separation. Adding signage in the recycling area could increase usage. Chris agrees, but warns of signage overload, which would negatively impact the program and recycling overall. Chris notes he can investigate signage overall at the Transfer Station and evaluate it.

Kristin Terkelsen asks if it would be worth surveying users of the recycling programs at the transfer station, asking if people knew about the program and what barriers they saw to participating. She noted there may be various issues such as not having a place in their house to compost or thinking it's too messy. John agrees with this idea. Barry agrees and asks Chris if he can contact Tracy and figure out the feasibility of this project. Barry also notes that the committee will need to find dates and times when they are available and willing to conduct this survey. John notes he is happy to go to the Transfer Station and spend time conducting the survey. Barry also advises creating a set of questions, so it is clear what data we are attempting to collect.

Kristin Terkelsen inquired if anybody had watched the Town Council meeting with the Joint Base Cape Cod (JBCC) presentation as it pertains to food waste. Jane Ward notes she did. JBCC is planning an industrial-scale composting trial with an \$80,000 grant, starting with a feasibility study. This project was mentioned in "Waste Today Magazine" and mentioned Kari Parcell, Waste Reduction coordinator with the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension, and Mary Ryther, Recycling and Solid Waste Coordinator for the Falmouth Department of Public Works. The committee has previously been in contact with Kari, and it may be worth reaching out to her. Barry requests John takes the lead on this and reach out to Kari, which John accepts.

c. Climate Change and Climate Science

Chris Gloninger, who normally provides the updates on this agenda item, is absent. As such, no updates were made. A short discussion was held, with Jane Ward noting that since the two hurricanes down south a few weeks ago, she has seen more articles stating everyone needs to pay attention and be cognizant. She notes it will be interesting to hear Chris' take on this. Jane also brings up a recent Town Council meeting regarding the relocation and hurricane hardening at Sandy Neck Beach.

Jane also notes that as a result of natural disasters, insurance companies are moving out

of, and refusing to insure, people in certain states. Barry notes that he was informed that all of Cape Cod is considered high risk for wind damage. John Solomon notes it is getting harder to get homeowner's insurance on the Cape from his experience.

d. EV Charging

Barry opened the discussion by asking if Rob Wilson had any updates. Rob Wilson indicates he heard back from the Conservation Commission regarding his query about charging money to use electric vehicle charging stations in front of his home. The Commission referred him to the Town Zoning Board who said it would not be possible. Barry asked if the answer was because Rob intended to charge for it, or if it was not allowed at all. Rob notes he was uncertain. A discussion among the group was held, coming to the assumption that it is likely because of the intent to charge for services, making it a business.

Jane Ward notes she recently attended a Massachusetts Recharge Event, a day-long update on electric vehicles and charging solutions. She will send the slides from that event to Chris Gadd for distribution to the committee.

New Business

a. Additional Updates from Committee Chair

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens the discussion by reviewing the solar firm presentation he brought up at the last meeting. Barry got the sense that, regardless of the merits of the initiative, it was not something the committee wanted to focus on. Additionally, it is not within the purview of the committee to help a business sell their product. Jane Ward agrees, and notes concerns different groups having their own agendas. If the committee were to entertain the idea, it would require the full attention of the committee. John Solomon notes agreement with Jane. Rob Wilson notes that solar charging is an important issue but there is concern with the committee being able to do it part-time. Barry concludes that there are questions regarding the sizing of the business, and in the grand scheme Barnstable's energy usage would be a fraction of the company's usage. He recommends tabling the topic for further discussion until raised at a future meeting. Kristin Terkelsen also notes that the possible support or sanctioning of a business would likely need to go through the Town's Legal department.

Barry motions to table further consideration of supporting or marketing the company to Barnstable residents. Jane seconds the motion. The committee voted unanimously.

Barry moves the discussion into the mold issue at the Barnstable United Elementary School. Jane notes that at the Town Council meeting on 10/10/24, several parents made public comments about the rates of asthma which had gone up significantly as a result of the mold issue. Jane notes that when COVID started this committee drafted a letter to the Town Council to look at air quality in municipal buildings, which got pushback from the Town due to existing issues. Barry asks both Jane and Councilor Terkelsen a procedural question pertaining to the 10/24/24 Town Council meeting, which will be a joint meeting of the Town Council and the School Board but focused mainly on budgets. Barry asked if the mold issue will be brought up at the meeting.

Councilor Terkelsen responded that Barry is correct that the meeting will focus primarily

on the budgets. The School Board is a separate entity so the best course of action would be to sit down with the Town Manager and Superintendent. Jane noted concerns that there is a “Get to it when we get to it” mentality. From her experience in the military, if an issue was found, it is fixed immediately. Jane knows of two companies that offer pro bono air quality monitoring, and that Boston Public Schools has an online air quality measuring site, accessible to the public 24/7. She intends to make a public comment during the 10/24/24 Town Council meeting. Councilor Terkelsen agrees that there is an issue to be addressed and advises Jane to mention the pro bono air monitoring companies in her comment as she has three minutes during public comment and it is important to note how Jane’s expertise can be helpful to the Town. Barry suggested that this can be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Barry brought up a group of students for the Massachusetts Institute of technology (MIT) who are part of a renewable energy group offering to interview town residents as a neutral, third-party regarding wind projects. Barry notes that Councilor Terkelsen is the one who came across this group, and it would be a mutually beneficial project. Jane also noted her support for the project.

Barry noted that at the Town council meeting on 10/24/24 a follow-up to the 9/5/24 workshop will be held to discuss New England Wind 2 (formerly Commonwealth Wind), specifically the proposed landing on Dowses Beach and if the issue in question applies specifically to Dowses Beach or is for landing anywhere within the Town. Barry inquired to Councilor Terkelsen if the Town has taken a formal position on this issue. Councilor Terkelsen informed Barry that the Town has not taken a formal position on the issue, and that in the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) filing the Town stated it was not in favor of landing at Dowses Beach due to the potential to disrupt ecological systems. She feels at some point Town Council will make a statement as the issue is not going away. More answers are anticipated during the 10/24/24 Town council meeting, which should stimulate an interesting conversation about wind.

Motion to Adjourn

- a. Barry Sheingold, Chair, moves to adjourn the meeting. Jane Ward Seconds. The committee voted unanimously. The meeting is adjourned at 6:21 PM.

Next Meeting: November 4, 2024, at 5:00 PM

DRAFT Upcoming Agenda for November 4, 2024

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of October 21, 2024, Meeting Minutes
3. Old Business
 - a. Green Communities
 - i. Relevant Updates
 - b. Food Waste
 - i. Relevant Updates
 - c. Climate Change and Climate Science
 - i. Relevant Updates
 - d. Air Quality Monitoring
 - i. Relevant Updates
4. New Business
 - a. Additional updates from Committee Chair
 - b. Discuss agenda for next meeting, November 18, 2024
5. Motion to adjourn

Respectfully submitted by Christopher Gadd, Communications Assistant, Barnstable Department of Public Works.