



Town of Barnstable Infrastructure and Energy Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, February 10, 2025, 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=IWwpqaeEVrQXL3rbEwApx5INmtAB6b.1>

Meeting ID: 811 8577 9775

Passcode: 568500

Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members Present: (On Zoom)

Barry Sheingold, Chair; Chris Gloninger, Vice Chair; Jane Ward; Rob Wilson; John Solomon; Ron Ruggiero; Gordon Starr, Town Council

Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members Absent:

Others in Attendance: (On Zoom)

Chris Gadd, Communications Assistant, Barnstable DPW

Agenda:

Call to Order

Barry Sheingold, Chair, called the February 10, 2025 meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee to order at 5:02 PM.

Approval of January 27, 2025, Meeting Minutes

No requested edits; John Solomon moves to approve the January 27, 2025, meeting minutes. Jane Ward seconds. The Committee voted unanimously to approve.

Old Business

a) Green Communities

Town Council Workshop

Chair, Barry Sheingold, opened the Green Communities discussion with an update on the proposed Stretch Code Workshop for Town Council, which is scheduled for Thursday, March 20, 2025. Sheingold has met with Town Manager Mark Ells in preparation for the workshop. Additionally, a workshop planning meeting has been scheduled for next Thursday morning, and includes David Anthony, Barnstable Director of Asset Management and Sean Hogan, Barnstable Sustainability Manager. Barnstable Director of Inspectional Services, and Building Commissioner, Brian Florence has been briefed; he is looking for clarity from the Town Manager in regard to his role during the workshop. To guide next week's meeting, Sheingold has prepared a rough outline to frame the workshop and the content to be covered.

From the Infrastructure and Energy Committee, the following members are expected to participate:

- Jane Ward – public health impacts of adopting the Stretch Code versus the base code
- Chris Gloninger – climate change and its relationship with the Stretch Code

In discussing the workshop content, Jane Ward revisits the need to 'declare a climate emergency', which she believed was a sentiment originally proposed by Councilor Gordon Starr back in 2019. Ward add, since then, "we have declared a climate emergency, so we should be taking that in consideration with everything we do." Ward notes that she can provide the date of the Town Council meeting when this declaration was made to help support Chris Gloninger's portion of the presentation at the workshop. This leads the Committee to discuss additional changes and initiatives that have taken place since the last time Town Council was briefed on the Stretch Code and Green Community program. Relevant happenings include changes in the State law from approximately 2021 and 2022 that set interim targets for decarbonization, a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, there is the Mass Save Program. All of which relates to the importance of climate change and this decision to reconsider Stretch Code adoption.

Sheingold also provided a brief summary of Maggie Downey, of Cape Light Compact's recent briefing to Town Council, in which she discussed the new 3 Year Plan. Downey outlined the program and the focus on electrification of heating, cooling and hot water heating, as well as the incentives. Additionally, Sheingold notes that he has spoken with several builders, including Bob Riley, and is hoping to have someone speak to the practical impacts of the Town adopting the Stretch Code. There is still the desire to involve a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) rater as well.

Ward adds that the goal of the workshop should be to put all of this "into context, i.e. what type of buildings are required to use this Stretch Code? How many buildings are there that are built each year in the Town in which this would apply? Ward feels this focuses on a fairly small number.

What is the inventory that David Anthony (Asset Management) is responsible for? A review of the municipal buildings, including the schools, that will benefit from the state incentives and other support programs.

Sheingold agrees in part and disagrees in part – where he agrees is the number of single-family homes that are built, are relatively small. The number of homes that would be subject to the large addition aspect of the Stretch Code likely will be smaller. He urges the Committee to get the data and notes he will follow up with Building Commissioner, Brian Florence. Sheingold will also follow up with Director of Asset Management, David Anthony, to provide information in regard to the types of energy efficiency measures and which town buildings would receive the benefit of the Green Communities Program. Sheingold notes that “we did learn from DOER already that the initial grant would be something over \$220,000.” Given people's concern about housing, and it being such an issue of public concern, Sheingold agrees that the Committee should put it in the context, that we are talking about a relatively small number of buildings the Stretch Code would affect. He also adds that the DOER amended their regulations to deal with many of the objections to how Stretch Code impacts new additions.

Ward echoes this sentiment, “I just remember feeling overwhelmed a few years ago, when it was brought up, thinking the Stretch Code is going to affect all these buildings. And it was significant, but not the majority...not a huge number really”. Sheingold rounds out the discussion by noting that there were folks who spoke out against the Stretch Code – a local builder, the Building Commissioner, Brian Florence – but with time and the desire to be consistent with the rest of Cape Cod, the Committee remains hopeful the conversation will go well this time.

Councilor Gordon Starr shares a historical reminder in regard to the last time Stretch Code was discussed, adding that, “he (Brian Florence) asked us to not pass the stretch code so that he could go to the state himself and create his own code just for the town of Barnstable, and it took them (Town Council) about 3 minutes to say ‘no’ and we’ve been stuck back there ever since”. This led Ward to ask Starr how he feels the current Town Council stands on this issue. Starr shares some thoughts, including the need to get a few builders and/or architects to speak in favor of the Stretch Code and share their experiences working with it across the Cape. Sheingold confirms that he does have speakers from the DOER lined up to participate in the workshop and there is a request to have a speaker specifically address the economics.

b) Food Waste

Chair, Barry Sheingold, opened the Food Waste discussion by asking John Solomon to share any relevant updates. John notes we are waiting for DPW Communications Manager, Kelly Collopy, to share her thoughts on the messaging and survey, and circulate with the Committee for review. However, while on that subject, he wanted to clarify that we should be making the distinction between food waste and waste in general as we continue these discussions and develop communications materials. There are essentially two types of food waste, the food that is actually wasted and at one point was perfectly good to eat, and then there is the large amount of food waste which was never edible such as the cob from corn on the cob, skin from butternut squash, etc. “When we talk about there being, you know, as much as 25 or 30% of municipal trash being food waste. That isn't all food that could have been eaten, some just got wasted”. It's important to us to talk about both and how the composting program and our communications can educate people on the overall environmental cost of wasting food. Sheingold and Solomon reinforce the desire to visit the Transfer Station during warmer weather to engage users in these educational conversations.

Ron Ruggiero asks to receive some supporting materials to help him get caught up on the food waste program and the Committee's initiatives – Solomon will send him background information. In the meantime, Ward and Solomon take turns shedding light on the significance of food waste and composting efforts, summarizing the benefits/need as, "really three main, big reasons...cutting down on solid waste overall, eliminating the landfill methane, and producing the compost which promotes plant growth and reduces need for agricultural chemicals".

Transfer Station Incident

The discussion transitions to the recent car accident at the Transfer Station, which resulted in a traumatic injury. Jane Ward suggests additional signage (i.e. a stop sign) be considered near the trash/recycling area. Councilor Starr offers to bring this discussion to DPW and the Transfer Station Supervisor for consideration.

c) Climate Change and Climate Science

Chair, Barry Sheingold, opens the Climate Science discussion by sharing that Vice Chair, Chris Gloninger, gave a really fantastic presentation to the Cape Cod Technology Council; there were a number of Committee members present.

Gloninger does not have any significant updates, but would like to converse with Barry offline about how best to prepare for the workshop, slides and data needed, etc. The conversation continues between Committee members and Councilor Starr in regard to public perception, public interest, and how best to interact and engage with Councilors. Councilor Starr adds that at the end of the workshop he'd like to see a policy statement of some sort in which the Town decides to move forward with (or not) the Stretch Code. The goal would be to bring a resolution to Town Council shortly after the workshop (~2 weeks), ensuring there isn't too much time left in between the presentation(s) and taking formal action. Public comment would need to be a part of that process as well.

d) Air Quality Monitoring

No major updates at this time. Jane Ward does note that the EPA hosted a webinar recently which had a big focus on indoor air quality and what it did for the health of the occupants and the productivity in schools and businesses. With better air quality – which is the big, the big step up between Base Code and Stretch Code – is ventilation that brings in outside air, not just circulating the existing air and running it through a filter, but bringing in outside air, resulting in air exchanges. "You get your carbon dioxide level down to a point where people can think well without headaches and not go to sleep". Ward notes there have been studies showing student test performances increase, business productivity increases, etc.

New Business

a) Additional updates from Committee Chair and Committee Members
None at this time.

b) Discuss Agenda for Next Meeting, February 18, 2025

Next week's meeting will follow a similar agenda and will include preparing for the upcoming workshop planning meeting on Thursday, February 20th, located in the Planning and Development Conference Room.

Assigned Tasks

- Barry: Continue workshop planning efforts, coordination with David Anthony, Brian Florence, DOER presenter(s)
- Jane: Prepare content for Town Council Workshop
- Chris: Prepare content for Town Council Workshop

Motion to Adjourn

Chris Gloninger made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Gordon Starr seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:54PM.

Next Meeting: February 18, 2025, at 5:00 PM

DRAFT Upcoming Agenda for February 18, 2025

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of February 10, 2025, Meeting Minutes
3. Old Business
 - a. Green Communities
 - i. Workshop Planning
 - ii. 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, March 4, 2025
 - c. Assigned Tasks
5. Motion to Adjourn

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Collopy, Communications Manager, Barnstable Department of Public Works