



# Town of Barnstable Infrastructure and Energy Committee

## Meeting Minutes

**Date: Monday, June 10, 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=IWwpaqEVRQXL3rbEwApX5INmtAB6b.1>

Meeting ID: 811 8577 9775

Passcode: 568500

### **Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members present: (On Zoom)**

Barry Sheingold, Chair; Peter Doyle, Vice Chair; Jane Ward; Rob Wilson; John Solomon; Chris Gloninger

### **Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members absent:**

William Beal

### **Others in Attendance: (On Zoom)**

Gordon Starr, Town Councillor; Alison Alessi, A3 Architects; Kelly Collopy, Communications Manager  
Department of Public Works

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### **Agenda:**

#### **1. Call to order**

#### **2. Approval of May 28, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

#### **3. Old Business**

##### **3 a. Green Communities Designation**

- i. Alison Alessi, A3 Architects, to provide information on Stretch Code and Green Communities Designation process

ii. Relevant updates

3 b. Food Waste

i. Relevant Updates

#### 4. New Business

4 a. Additional updates from Committee Chair

4 b. Review proposed meeting schedule for remainder of 2024

July 15

August 12

September 9 and 23

October 14 and 28

November 11 and 25

December 9 and 23

4 c. Discuss agenda for next meeting

#### 5. Motion to Adjourn

##### Call to Order:

Barry Sheingold, Chair, called the June 10, 2024, meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee (IEC) to order at 5:03 PM. The meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee was held remotely.

##### Approval of Meeting Minutes

Barry Sheingold, Chair, moves to discuss the May 28, 2024, meeting minutes. Jane Ward moves the motion to approve the May 28, 2024, meeting minutes, John Solomon seconds. Committee voted unanimously to approve the May 28, 2024, meeting minutes.

##### Old Business

a. Green Communities Designation

Jane Ward introduces Alison Alessi of A3 Architects, who originally invited Ward to join the Infrastructure and Energy Committee. Ward sets the stage about the need for Alessi's insight about Green Community designation and the need for Barnstable to pursue this designation for better synergy with the building communities across Cape Cod. Alessi is an accomplished green architect, A3 Architects takes a very practical approach to sustainable building development, working towards projects being as close to Net Zero as possible.

Barry Sheingold, Chair, provides a brief overview of where the Committee stands right now – teeing Alison up for detailed discussion. Currently, the Committee has engaged with the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) regional coordinator and is actively educating itself regarding changes to the Stretch Code since this concept was last brought before Town Council. Sheingold adds that he has reached out to Barnstable Director of Inspectional Services, Brian Florence, to set up a meeting in which discussions surrounding building codes, the Stretch Code, and the Committee's desire to pursue Green Community designation could be had. Sheingold also confirms that the DOER would consider an application from Barnstable by the end of this year. Next steps would be to take this conversation back to Town Council, perhaps by early Fall, and prepare an application before year's end.

Councilor Gordon Starr reaffirms that the Green Community designation has five (5) components, one of which is the Stretch Code, which is the largest issue. Sheingold adds that three (3) of the five (5) components appear to have been met, so yes, focusing on the Stretch Code is paramount.

Alessi begins her discussion by sharing that she feels the Committee's timing is good, because "builders are really dialed into this right now...for the 14 other towns on the Cape that are already Green Communities, there are big changes coming for them in three weeks." On June 30, 2024, the Stretch Code changes. The State will really be incentivizing electrification – so for example, if you have gaps in the building, there will be penalties. Alessi walks through some of the expected Home Energy Rating System (HERS rating) changes to come. Alessi also confirms that when this designation was first brought forth in a public setting (around 2010), there were definitely builders who were against this. One of the initial complaints was that there was not a desire to have a different building code in every town, yet that's now what we are heading for. The code is different in every town, except for Barnstable – Barnstable is staying at the same code. Alessi recommends that if the Committee was to approach Town Council, with Director Brian Florence, there should be a HERS rater present to assist in the discussion. Overall, Alessi acknowledges that this is a complicated subject, and very complicated to debate in a public setting.

Alessi continues by sharing various HERS rating and testing scenarios that she's experienced while working on a project. She also adds that it's important to note that this code isn't triggered unless the project is 1,000 square feet or more, so that's a pretty big addition or renovation, and not applicable to every project. Alessi feels this 'performance code' is eye opening and very informative to everyone involved in a new construction or gut renovation. The data entry as part of the code/model "spits out performance data like this is how much it's going to cost to heat this house, this is how many kilowatt hours it's going to use to heat this house...this is really helpful information, and just one piece of the HERS rating. Very valuable tool." Alessi also shares that she loves this type of testing because it's third-party independent testing. The modeling side of HERS rating also allows you to try a variety of scenarios to help you determine how the building will perform, potential rebates, etc. Alessi and Sheingold then discuss additional details about rebate systems, utilizing HERS raters and modeling to assist with rebate(s) and the Mass Save Program.

Alessi comments on how to approach these conversations, "one approach I tried to take with Brian (Florence) and the building department was, hey, how many projects is this really affecting? How many new construction building permits are pulled in the Town of Barnstable?" Alessi states that she feels some of the opposition comes from the idea that this is going to cost so much for everybody, but she doesn't think that is necessarily true. Alessi also suggests perhaps having a builder as part of the presentation committee when this topic is brought to Town Council.

Discussion continues amongst Committee members and Alessi regarding other questions or 'hurdles' that may be presented as Stretch Code and Green Community designation discussions continue with Town leadership and the community. Topics include heating and cooling, penalties for gas utility usage, use of mini splits and impact on electricity usage, heat pump hot water heaters versus traditional electric hot water heaters, etc.

Sheingold brings forward next steps, asking Councilor Gordon Starr how he recommends the Committee moves forward with educating Town Council and eventually moving toward a vote – consensus is to propose a Green Communities Workshop, geared towards explaining the Stretch Code, during a regular Town Council meeting. Recommendation would be to ensure this Workshop is collaborative and comprehensive; invite a HERS Rater, potentially a representative from Cape Light Compact, Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative, consider involvement from Brian

Florence/Barnstable Inspectional Services, etc. Use this Workshop as a launching pad for additional conversations surrounding Green Communities Designation. Jane Ward reminds the group to confer with Barnstable Asset Manager, David Anthony, regarding his role in the conversation and his work on the other Green Communities Designation requirements (energy reduction plan, electric vehicles, etc. Councilor Starr reminds the group that this is a complicated topic, there is a lot to absorb.

Key messaging point(s) that Alessi circles back on:

- The code is complicated, definitely need to have a HERS rater as part of any discussion/presentation/workshop
- “14 out of 15 Towns on the Cape”
- “There are 155+ designated communities from the Berkshires to Cape Cod”

Sheingold summarizes the need for the Committee to have a plan and scheduling of a Town Council Workshop for this Fall. Councilor Starr also suggests perhaps engaging Rob Brennan, a local builder, who is also part of the Cape Climate Collaborative. Councilor Starr also inquires about engaging with a local HERS rater who resides in Barnstable.

Alison Alessi and Jane Ward exit the meeting at 5:43PM. Quorum remains.

Sheingold advances the conversation, highlighting additional Green Communities updates, including his outreach to Director of Inspectional Services, Brian Florence. Additionally, Sheingold will be hosting a call with a member of the Falmouth Energy Committee and reached out Habitat to Humanity to schedule a discussion as well.

b. Food Waste

John Solomon adds insight about Recycle Works, who has been providing education about commercial food waste/composting. Discussion continues about preliminary communications plan with the Transfer Station. DPW Communications Manager, Kelly Collopy, discusses next steps for educational food composting video via Barnstable Government Access. To begin an email thread with the Committee to share ideas on possible speaker(s) and expert(s) who may be interested and available for the video discussion.

**New Business**

a. Additional Updates from Committee Chair and Committee Members

- Barry Sheingold, Chair, discusses the increased climate change inquiries, projects, and initiatives being discussed around Town and largely across the Cape and region. With Committee member, Chris Gloninger’s background in climate communications, Sheingold inquires about his interest in briefing the group and leading a larger conversation about how the Committee can more actively communicate and advise both Town Council and the Barnstable community.

b. Scheduling of Remaining 2024 Committee Meetings

- Proposed meeting schedule:
  - July 15 (approved)
  - August 12 (approved)
  - September 9 (approved) and 23 (approved)
  - ~~October 14 and 28~~ October 7 (approved) and October 21 (approved)
  - ~~November 11 and 25~~ November 12 (approved) and November 25 (approved)

- December 9 (approved) and 23 (approved with the caveat that this may be cancelled)
- c. Discuss Next Meeting Agenda
  - Chris to speak about Climate Change, Town’s declaration of a Climate Emergency
  - Continue Green Communities and Food Waste discussions

Barry Sheingold entertains a motion to adjourn the meeting; Rob Wilson makes the motion and Chris Gloninger seconds. The Committee voted unanimously. The meeting is adjourned at 6:06PM.

Next Meeting: June 25, 2024, at 5:00PM

DRAFT Upcoming Agenda for June 25, 2024

1. Call to order
2. Approval of June 10, 2024, Meeting Minutes
3. Old Business
  - 3 a. Green Communities
    - iii. Relevant updates
  - 3 b. Food Waste
    - i. Relevant updates
4. New Business
  - 4 a. Climate Change and Climate Science Communications – discussion led by Chris Gloninger
  - 4 b. Additional updates from Committee Chair
  - 4 c. Discuss agenda for next meeting
5. Motion to Adjourn

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