



Town of Barnstable Infrastructure and Energy Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, December 9, 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=IWwpqaeEVrQXL3rbEwApx5INmtAB6b.1>

Meeting ID: 811 8577 9775

Passcode: 568500

Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members Present: (On Zoom)

Barry Sheingold, Chair; Chris Gloninger; John Solomon; Rob Wilson; Jane Ward; Kristin Terkelsen, Town Council

Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members Absent:

No members were absent.

Others in Attendance: (On Zoom)

Chris Gadd, Communications Assistant, Department of Public Works

Agenda:

Call to Order

Barry Sheingold, Chair, called the December 9, 2024, meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee to order at 5:01 PM. The meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee was held remotely.

Approval of November 12, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Barry Sheingold, Chair, moves to discuss the November 12, 2024, meeting minutes. Barry has one

requested edit:

Page 7-New Business-Additional Updates from Committee Chair-Commonwealth Wind update the first paragraph to read “A Town Council vote was held regarding the Commonwealth Wind project landing at Dowse’s Beach. The Council voted to oppose the specific project. Most opponents to the vote wanted a broader stance, as the vote only addressed the project, not Wind Companies entirely.”

Hearing no further requested edits, John Solomon moves to approve the minutes with the requested edit. Barry seconds. The Committee unanimously approves the November 12, 2024, minutes with the requested edit.

Election of Vice Chair

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee. Barry nominates Chris Gloninger. John Solomon seconds. No other nominations are heard. Barry opens voting for the position of Vice Chair of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee. The Committee unanimously votes to elect Chris Gloninger. Chris Gloninger is elected as the Vice Chair of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee.

Old Business

a) Green Communities

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens the discussion by noting a recent discussion with Lisa Sullivan from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (MassDOER). Prior to the meeting, Barry sent an email to all committee members, originally from MassDOER, regarding the Green Communities Program. Of note for the committee is an update to the fuel-efficient vehicle policy, which is necessary for the Green Community Designation. Lisa suggested Barry contact David Anthony, Director, Town of Barnstable Asset Management Department, and Sean Hogan, Town of Barnstable Environmental Sustainability Manager, who have previously been involved with this policy. Barry will work to ensure David and Sean are aware of the updated policy.

Barry also notes that during his conversations with Lisa Sullivan, he inquired about MassDOER’s adoption of regulations that had been proposed, ultimately making the Stretch Code more lenient. He also inquired about MassDOER’s economic analysis of Green Communities. Lisa did not have an update on these topics.

Barry notes an update from Mass Save® that revolves around a recent proposal to modify the Mass Save® program. In essence, the incentives have changed as the program refocuses on weatherization and Energy-Star® appliance ratings. Barry will circulate the information from Mass Save® but cautions that it is fairly technical, and further discussion would likely need an expert to be brought in.

Jane Ward brings up a recent conversation she had with Maggie Downey, Executive Director of Cape Light Compact, in which it seemed that part of the changes will be the “backing off” of gas companies. Barry responds that it is enhanced coordination between various utilities. Previous efforts focused on energy conservation, improved insulation, and efficient appliances. That effort is now focused on decarbonization.

Jane also brings up a concern about promoting the Green Communities Designation when the criteria are changing. Barry responds that it is the “nature of the beast” and notes that building codes change, and the Mass Save® program changes in approximately three-year increments. When this goes before the Town Council it will be important to keep the Council informed of the changing aspects.

Barry notes that, in relation to bringing the topic up to Town Council, other Town committees provide updates to Town Council, and it may be worthwhile for the Committee to provide a report in the coming weeks. This would have to be after the New Year and could potentially expand to a workshop to answer questions. If all goes well, MassDOER would also finalize the regulations on renovations and major additions by the time of the report.

b) Food Waste

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens the discussion by asking John Solomon for any updates. John responds that he has been coordinating with the Town Transfer Station and plans to survey residents utilizing existing recycling programs and see what can be learned about potential obstacles residents see preventing the use of food waste composting and ways to change behavior. Barry requests that John send a draft survey to him to review, which John agrees with.

In addition to reviewing the questions, Barry notes that it may cause confusion or suspicion to randomly ask people and inquires if it would be possible to have some means of identifying themselves at the Transfer Station as members of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee. Jane Ward suggests putting the survey on letterhead. Chris Gadd offers to investigate nametags that could include the person’s name and the committee name. John Solomon inquires about safety vests. Chris Gadd will investigate the possibility of getting safety vests.

John Solomon also reports that he would like to look more into what surrounding communities do for commercial food waste before sending any emails. This will allow the possibility of collaboration between communities and make food waste a Cape/County-wide effort. Barry notes his approval.

Jane Ward notes that she attended the Annual Summit of the CARE for the Cape and Islands™ organization on November 21, 2024. She notes two presentations that would be beneficial for this effort, one by a Falmouth Public Schools teacher who initiated a food waste program in the school system, and one by RecycleWorks who have collaborated with the Hyannis Yacht Club to address food waste. Both presentations are available online and have been provided to the committee via email. Jane also notes she met Alan Robinson, Chairman of the Falmouth Solid Waste Advisory Committee and is planning to meet with him and discuss food waste. John expresses interest in meeting him as well. Jane suggests that prior to sending emails it would be worthwhile to chat with the Hyannis Yacht Club, which will give further insight into informing other businesses where to find resources.

Barry notes that he recently read an article that stated Massachusetts is the most advanced state in the nation for reducing food waste. It is still below the goal, but

interesting to note. In regard to food waste averages, schools produce a significant percentage of a community's total food waste. The Falmouth School program averages 60%. It would be worthwhile to investigate ways to address food waste within the school system.

c) Climate Change and Climate Science

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens the discussion by asking Christopher Gloninger, Vice Chair, for any updates. Chris Gloninger shares that recent readings show water temperatures in Nantucket Sound at 47°F (8.3°C), while the average is 38°F (3.3°C) for this time of year. This is the warmest fall on record and, if temperatures continue this trend, it will be the warmest year on record. This warming is not localized to Barnstable. This is causing the significant storms we have seen, and the upcoming sou'easter slated to hit on Wednesday of this week.

Chris Gloninger shares a graph showing the rate of warming increasing since 1970 and recent years being above the trend line. Chris further compares this to the human body, where "normal" body temperature is 98.6°F (37°C) and Earth is currently at 101.4°F (38.5°C). Many reports refer to 1.5°C (2.7°F) above average, and this approach better relates that change to the public. While Green Communities play a part in mitigating climate change, it is a small part of the larger conversation. Jane Ward adds a rhetorical question of how does a person with a 101.4°F fever feel? This must be how the Earth feels. The Town declared a Climate Emergency several years ago, but it doesn't seem like we're acting like the situation is an emergency.

Barry inquires about recent reporting that stated reaching the 1.5°C threshold would take until 2030 at the earliest. Is there any update on the timing, as we see we've reached that threshold already? Chris Gloninger responds that the scientific community was not prepared and should receive this news as a cautionary tale. Many assumed that La Nina would offset warming but that has not been the case. While it's not linear, the rate of warming has increased significantly in the last few years. The next threshold is 2°C and current understandings show that it is possible within a few decades. Carbon capture technology is needed to reduce the risk of reaching that threshold. Aside from policy changes, only major natural events such as volcanic eruptions could cool the Earth below the 1.5°C threshold.

d) Air Quality Monitoring

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens the discussion by asking Jane Ward for updates, citing that this item doesn't need to be reported on at every meeting. Jane responds that she agrees, but as the Green Communities designation becomes adopted, a part of the discussion does revolve around air quality monitoring.

Jane updated the committee on a recent conversation she had with the Barnstable School Superintendent regarding air quality, resulting from mold issues over the summer and further complaints after remediation was completed. Friends of Jane who work in air quality monitoring offered to conduct three months of monitoring pro bono. The superintendent has decided to accept this offer, with monitoring set to begin in January. This is a great step forward as it can show possible issues other than mold and help keep students, teachers, and staff healthy while giving

reassurance to parents and community members.

Barry Sheingold, Chair, inquires about when the last time the Stretch code was modified regarding improved ventilation. He also inquires whether the Stretch Code promotes air quality and ventilation more than the Base Code. Jane does not have the answer at this time but will report about this at the next meeting.

New Business

a) Additional updates from Committee Chair

Tax Credits

Barry notes recent reports that the incoming presidential administration aims to eliminate tax credits for electric vehicles, solar power, and heat pumps. Barry acknowledges that not everyone may be in the right financial position to make the switch, but now may be the best time to make the switch. The possibility of tariffs also affects the economics of these items, along with the general supply chain. Much of the efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are at an individual level and we should make people aware of the potential loss of tax credits.

Jane Ward asks what can be done to publicize this information and suggests writing an Op-Ed. Barry responds that the idea is not unique to him. He has been asked to give a talk about the topic on Friday and will share the remarks after the talk.

Barry continues that the drive for the tax credits comes from the existing tax law which expires at the end of 2025. Jane notes that many elements of the law are bipartisan efforts, and it will be interesting to see what comes of it. Barry notes that changes could occur with the expiration of the current tax law or on day one of the new administration.

Jane suggests pitching the story to local radio stations or to Barnstable eNews. This doesn't have to be as a committee. Chris Gadd notes he can investigate getting something in Barnstable eNews regarding the tax credit.

"Side Agreement" Petition

Barry Sheingold, Chair, provided updates from recent Town Council meetings. During the November 21, 2024 Town Council Meeting a vote was held on Item# 2025-047, a citizen's petition requesting Town Council vote to revoke and rescind actions taken in Executive Session on June 13, 2024, approving the terms of execution of a "Side Agreement". This side agreement pertains to an offshore wind project by Avangrid. After discussion, Town Council did not approve, and as a result the agreement will not be reconsidered.

MIT Student Group

Barry Sheingold, Chair, reported that the MIT Student Group looking into public perception of offshore wind presented a report at the Town Council meeting on December 5, 2024. Barry noted some uncertainty about what the group was specifically looking at. Councilor Terkelsen noted that the scope of the group was to evaluate all projects to help get a better understanding of potential future projects and how best to conduct public outreach for these types of projects.

Jane Ward asks if there is a way to volunteer to talk with the group to have their opinions included. Councilor Terkelsen responds that there is an email address that she will forward after the meeting.

Barry asks if Councilor Terkelsen could also provide the report that was given to Town Council. Councilor Terkelsen agrees and will email the report after the meeting.

Barry inquires on the goal of the project and whether it focuses on the process that the Town/Companies follow or on the substance of the project itself, i.e. off shore wind in general. Councilor Terkelsen explains that the group aims to address both. If another project were to be proposed, knowing what information the public wants and how best to proceed with these projects will be beneficial to all involved. The Town is the first community to let MIT in for an offshore wind project, and we owe it to communities at large to provide this insight.

Barry gives credit to Councilor Terkelsen as she is the one who brought this up to the Town Council and made this possible.

New Member

Councilor Terkelsen notes that the Appointments Committee has approved a new member of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee, Ron Ruggiero. With this approval it now goes before the Town Council at the 12/12/24 meeting (Agenda Item#2025-061) with a second reading scheduled for 01/09/25. Once approved and sworn in by the Town Clerk, he will be attending the meetings. Councilor Terkelsen notes that Mr. Ruggiero is a police officer, caterer, and real estate agent. He has been watching the committee meetings for the last few months and seems to be a good, engaged individual. Barry notes that it will be good to have a fresh face and fill some of the vacancies of the committee.

b) Future Meeting Dates

Barry Sheingold, Chair, opens the discussion by inquiring about the meeting scheduled for December 23, 2024. He had intended to keep it as a placeholder in case MassDOER had updates, but it does not seem like they will. Barry inquired if any of the committee members had a preference either way about holding a meeting that day, as he is inclined not to have it. All members responded either against having a meeting or having no preference. Barry moves to cancel the December 23, 2024 meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee. Jane Ward seconds. The committee votes unanimously to cancel the December 23, 2024 meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee.

Barry moves the discussion to future meeting dates for the first half of 2025. He previously circulated a list of dates, following the schedule of the second and fourth Monday of each month, with adjustments for holidays. The circulated dates are for planning purposes and can be adjusted. Barry moves to adopt the following meeting dates, with all meetings held virtually at 5PM:

- Monday, January 13
- Monday, January 27
- Monday, February 10

- Tuesday, February 18
- Monday, March 10
- Monday, March 24
- Monday, April 14
- Monday, April 28
- Monday, May 12
- Tuesday, May 27
- Monday, June 16

Jane Ward seconds the motion. The committee unanimously votes to adopt the listed meeting dates.

c) Discuss Agenda for Next Meeting, December 23, 2024

As previously noted, this meeting is cancelled. The next meeting will be held on January 13, 2025.

Jane Ward suggests having a representative from either Falmouth Public Schools or RecycleWorks/Hyannis Yacht Club to talk about their food waste efforts. John Solomon indicates his support for either. Barry indicates his support for either but is inclined to have the representative from RecycleWorks/Hyannis Yacht Club as it is more local and relevant. Jane agrees. Barry tasks Jane and John to invite the representative and report back to Barry and Chris Gadd for inclusion on the agenda at either of the January meetings.

Barry Sheingold, Chair, requests an edit to the agenda to add an ongoing “to-do” list item under “New Business” to consolidate and keep track of action items. Chris Gadd indicates he will add this to the agenda going forward.

Motion to Adjourn

Barry Sheingold, Chair, moves to adjourn the meeting. Jane Ward seconds. The committee voted unanimously. The meeting is adjourned at 6:20 PM.

Next Meeting: January 13, 2025 at 5:00 PM

Assigned Tasks

- Barry Sheingold, Chair,
 - Discuss the updated fuel-efficient vehicle policy with David Anthony and Sean Hogan.
 - Circulate remarks from talk on Friday
- John Solomon
 - Send draft transfer station survey questions to Barry and Chris Gadd
 - Work with Jane to invite the representative from RecycleWorks/Hyannis Yacht Club to a future meeting
- Jane Ward
 - Gather information about ventilation/air quality in the Base & Stretch Code
 - Work with John to invite the representative from RecycleWorks/Hyannis Yacht Club to a future meeting
- Chris Gadd
 - Look into nametags for transfer station survey
 - Look into safety vests for transfer station survey
 - Look into eNews Story about Tax Credit

DRAFT Upcoming Agenda for January 13, 2025

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of December 9, 2024, Meeting Minutes
3. Presentation from TBD
4. 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
5. New Business
 - a. Additional updates from Committee Chair
 - b. Discuss agenda for next meeting, January 27, 2025
 - c. Assigned Tasks
6. Motion to Adjourn

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