



## **Town of Barnstable Infrastructure and Energy Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 5:00PM**

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#### *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; Ron Ruggiero; Gordon Starr, Town Council Committee Liaison

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

John Solomon

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

Chris Gadd, Communications Assistant, Barnstable DPW; Kristin Terkelsen, Town Council

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#### **Agenda:**

##### **Call to Order**

Chair Barry Sheingold called the February 18, 2025, meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee to order at 5:01 PM.

##### **Approval of February 10, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

Chair Barry Sheingold opens the meeting with a discussion of the February 10, 2025 meeting minutes. Jane Ward has a few comments: the first being on page 2, within the second paragraph, it

should read *‘Ward added’* not Ward *‘awarded’*. Further down the page, second line from the bottom, where the Committee discusses buildings required to meet the Stretch Code per year, Ward requests to reorder the sentence(s) to read, *“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.”* Ward has a similar comment about the bottom of the first paragraph on page 3, reemphasizing *‘a small number of buildings’*. Lastly, on page 4, Ward requests to clarify the big difference between the Base Code and the Stretch Code is *“ventilation upgrades to bring in outside air”*.

No other changes were requested. With these edits, Jane Ward makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes for February 10, 2025. Rob Wilson seconds the motion; the Committee votes and passes unanimously.

## **Old Business**

### **a) Green Communities**

#### *Town Council Workshop*

Chair Barry Sheingold opens the Green Communities discussion with an update on planning efforts with Committee members as well as Asset Management Director David Anthony, Sustainability Manager Sean Hogan, and Inspectional Services Director Brian Florence. Sheingold also had a follow-up meeting with Town Manager Mark Ells.

Sheingold had felt that other than the Stretch Code, we were *‘fairly advanced’* in regard to the other criteria – notably the energy reduction plan. When meeting, Sheingold learned from Director Anthony that there is still quite a bit of work to do in other areas. Director Anthony suggested that rather than seeking Town Council approval of the Stretch Code, perhaps seek approval or support in regard to moving forward with the additional work that need to be done to bring the Green Community decision to Town Council. Sheingold is trying to get a better understanding of the time it will take Anthony and his team. Additionally, Director Florence attended the planning meeting and stated he did not want to participate in the upcoming Town Council Workshop. With that, the Workshop agenda includes:

- DOER with (2) two speakers; one presentation on the Green Community Program and another presentation on the Stretch Code
- Sheingold is also speaking with Chris Mazzola, a certified HERS rater to gauge his interest in a presentation
- Chris Gloninger will provide a short presentation on how this all related to climate science and the Town’s policy to minimize greenhouse gas emissions
- Jane to present on the public health aspect

The Committee requested an hour and a half for the workshop; with this in mind the suggestion was made to limit the presentation portion to 45-50 minutes to allow for ample time for discussion and a question/answer period. Presentations will need to focus and be less than 5 minutes or less. Sheingold suggests he and/or Committee staff support, Kelly Collopy, can assist with stringing together each presenter’s slides into a single PowerPoint presentation file.

Overall, the Committee agrees with this approach. Jane Ward encourages that, “any one of these talks could be the whole hour, so we have to really work to try to hit the key points”. Ward also comments on the declared climate emergency and how that relates to Chris

Gloninger's work with sea level rise and modeling. Director Anthony had also suggested that in Sheingold's introduction, he remind Town Council that it was the Town Council declaration of a climate emergency that we (the Committee) are responding to, by recommending the Town take a closer look at the Green Community Program.

Sheingold shares a brief outline of what he intends to cover, which includes:

- An introduction summarizing the Green Communities as a State program that provides hundreds of thousands of dollars for municipal energy efficiency and decarbonization projects
- Explanation of the 5 criteria requirements, including the energy reduction plan, adoption of the Stretch Code, and advancement of the Town Council's policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- A reminder that Barnstable is the only Town on the Cape that is not a Green Community
- And then to answer the why – why should we consider addressing this, consider adopting the Stretch Code, and ultimately pursue becoming a Green Community

Sheingold also shares an overview of how he plans to address the 'why', leveraging the experience of HERs raters, the use of performance-based Stretch Code, changes in State law requiring greenhouse gas reductions, the focus on electrification, and resources/incentives from the Cape Light Compact Mass Save® Program – with all of this said, the economics have also become more attractive.

Councilor Gordon Starr interjects, encouraging Sheingold to also mention the benefits to the Town, in terms of significant yearly grants to improve infrastructure and buildings across Town, to make them more energy efficient. Rob Wilson later clarifies that it's not necessarily a yearly grant, year after year, you do have to submit for the available grant(s), and the average is around 8 years between grant award. Sheingold does agree that yes, the grant portion is competitive and has become more competitive over the years. Ward suggests finding data on what other Cape Towns have been awarded as part of the Green Community Program. Sheingold suggests that Lisa Sullivan (of DOER) can speak about the grant opportunities and trends on the Cape.

Ward circles back on the benefits conversation, encouraging Sheingold to speak about the new flexibility. "Just recently the program became more flexible...some of the some of the pushback, some of the concerns, from 2021, are no longer there." The program has evolved because a lot communities shared that desire for more flexibility. Conversation continues about how deep to get on the background and benefits. In which Councilor Starr asks about the goal of the workshop and what action the Committee wants Town Council to take. Ultimately, the goals are to get a sense that they (Town Council) would like the Stretch Code to be adopted and for the Town to be a Green Community in terms of how we get there. Discussion continues about the Town's appetite to proceed with the energy reduction plan, the effort needed to bring that to completion, and the change(s) since the last time this was all brought before Town Council. The Committee also discusses the electric vehicle policy.

Councilor Starr circles back with his recommendation for how to proceed and direct Town Council, in which his proposal would be to vote to pass the Stretch Code and accept the Stretch Code as the building code for the Town. And then follow up with approval to instruct the Town Manager to finish the work needed to complete the rest of the (Green Community) application

and submit it. He recognizes that internally, within the Town, there is opposition to the Stretch Code. Ward adds to this, sharing her conversation with local green architect, Dan Lewis, who is in favor of Barnstable becoming a Green Community, but does not like the regulations and did not want to talk on behalf of the Stretch Code either. Ward adds that, "I think a lot of folks think that there's too many regulations or the regulations are too cumbersome..." Discussion continues about the need for workforce training and to make it easier for these various systems and regulations to work together more effectively. Councilor Starr brings the conversation full circle by adding that "we've got 14 towns that already do this, and people, most of these builders don't work in one town..."

Sheingold restates his commitment to follow-up with Town Manager Mark Ells and to get a clearer view of the status of the energy reduction plan. Ward takes this opportunity to ask Councilor Kristin Terkelsen if she has any additional comments or concerns with the content proposed for the workshop. Councilor Terkelsen's largest piece of advice is to consider the audience and the need to balance between the councilors who will be ready to vote right away versus the councilors who will want to be fully informed. She also feels the adoption of the Stretch Code really comes down to the "dollars and cents" and the cost impact on builders in the community.

Councilor Starr provides another alternative way to address opposition or concerns – the impact of having to retrofit houses, potentially 80% of the homes on Cape Cod. That's one of the reasons why electric rates are going up. We're paying for incentives to retrofit insulation and heat pumps and different ways to make all of our housing stock more energy efficient. If we can turn the tide a little bit and make them energy efficient from the beginning, then later on down the road it won't cost us 6 times as much to retrofit them. "We have to think about it as a bigger societal need" as opposed to one builder. Ron Ruggiero follows this up with a question regarding who really pays the cost – the builder implementing these energy efficient upgrades, or is that passed down and in turn pushed onto the consumer? Sheingold provides a summary of how this is broken down by the DOER and the potential savings and flexibility DOER analysis shows for the construction industry. Ruggiero is trying to understand why there is opposition from the building community – is it their profit margins? Both Sheingold and Ward agree it depends on the builder and the available incentives and rebates. Ward also provides Ruggiero with additional context from conversations with green architect, Allison Alessi, who presented to the Committee last year.

Chris Gloninger adds that one of the most impactful discussion items he covers in his climate change talks is the fact that "for every dollar spent on mitigation and adaptation, you save \$7 in recovery costs and with a billion-dollar disaster every 2 and a half weeks...that is one hell of a return on investment..." If there are similar figures or data, the Committee can use to help educate on the benefit of adopting the Stretch Code, that would be useful to the workshop. The Committee continues to discuss potential barriers for various audiences (i.e. builders) and how to overcome those in the various presentations planned for the workshop.

b) Food Waste

John Solomon was not present; no relevant updates.

c) Climate Change and Climate Science

No relevant updates.

d) Air Quality Monitoring

As it relates to what the Committee is doing with Green Communities, Jane Ward shares that, "I think most of the towns on the Cape that have gotten money from the State have used it for indoor air quality improvements in schools. They've worked on their HVAC system and their indoor air quality." This is a topic of conversation Ward wants to explore offline with Barnstable Sustainability Manager, Sean Hogan.

**New Business**

a) Additional updates from Committee Chair and Committee Members

No additional updates at this time.

b) Discuss Agenda for Next Meeting, March 10, 2025

Sheingold proposes following the same format – with the focus of the next meeting being the final preparations for the upcoming Town Council workshop.

**Assigned Tasks**

- Jane Ward – work on presentation
- Chris Gloninger – work on presentation
- Barry Sheingold – work on presentation/workshop introduction, follow up with Town Manager Ells, follow up on status of energy reduction plan
- Ron Ruggiero – volunteers to help review/proof any of the presentations, will also look into what the Tech Council is doing with broadband

**Motion to Adjourn**

Rob Wilson makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ron Ruggiero seconds, the Committee votes unanimously. The February 18, 2025, meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee is adjourned at 6:04 PM.

Next Meeting: March 10, 2025, at 5:00 PM

DRAFT Upcoming Agenda for March 10, 2025

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of February 18, 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 24, 2025
  - c. Assigned Tasks
- 5. Motion to Adjourn

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