



Clean Energy Future Committee

November 22, 2019

8:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Arlington Town Hall, Lyons Hearing Room

These minutes were approved at the December 20, 2019 meeting.

Members present: Jim DiTullio (by phone), Ryan Katofsky (by phone), Pasi Miettinen, Ken Pruitt, Dave Levy, Marc Breslow, Adam Chapdelaine, Dan Amstutz, Coralie Cooper, Dan Dunn, Nellie Aikenhead

Members not present: Shelly Dein, Emily Sullivan.

The Meeting Convened at 8:03 a.m.

Minutes: The minutes from 10/25/2019 were unanimously approved.

Retreat Discussion

Mr. Pruitt discussed the Committee's planned retreat, which will be on Saturday February 1st, 9am to 12 noon. While not all the logistics are planned yet, the main purpose will be for the Committee to have a longer session to discuss the Net Zero Plan.

Next Meeting

The Committee agreed to move the meeting scheduled for December 27 to Friday December 20th. The discussion will include draft measures to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Mr. Pruitt discussed the greenhouse gas inventory tool being developed for Arlington, Natick and Melrose by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the firm DNV GL. Committee members Emily Sullivan and Ken Pruitt, along with two Arlington volunteers, recently attended a training session on this tool. Arlington's greenhouse gas inventory will provide an inventory by sector. This tool should be able to be updated without a "heavy lift" since it has been designed for ease of use. The tool is still being finalized, but an Arlington inventory with all data should be finalized in Q1, 2020.

Net Zero Plan

MAPC is assisting Arlington in the drafting of a Net Zero Plan. MAPC is assembling sample mitigation measures already produced by other Massachusetts communities into a net zero "tool kit." The Council is providing

Arlington with raw spreadsheets of measures that may be included in the tool kit so that we can consider whether to incorporate them in our Net Zero Plan.

The first set of sample GHG mitigation measures MAPC shared with our Committee were related to residential, commercial and municipal buildings. The Committee discussed 17 of these measures. Committee members Ryan Katofsky and Pasi Miettinen had previously commented on these measures, and their comments were included in the draft document reviewed by the Committee. Mr. Pruitt proposed first eliminating measures that don't make sense in Arlington. He also proposed to add measures that are not on this list at present. The Committee agreed and discussed measures one at a time with the opportunity to make edits on the existing proposals, clarify language, etc.

Regarding measures to advance energy efficiency and weatherization, the Committee debated existing benefits of the Mass Save program and if it would move the needle to promote weatherization further. Do the houses most in need of weatherization participate in the program? Should the program be changed?

Regarding a suggested measure to explore adopting a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) bylaw, the Committee debated whether businesses would participate and the level of benefit. The Committee endorsed examining if this could be quickly adopted.

Regarding a suggested measure to investigate opportunities to develop Town energy efficiency programs, it was the sense of the Committee that this would make more sense if Arlington had its own electric utility, but that is currently impossible due to a state moratorium on new municipal utilities.

Regarding "Solarize Plus, HeatSmart, and other programs," Mr. Pruitt commented that the existing HeatSmart program, just concluded, had 800 people sign up with initial interest, 100+ contracts for air source heat-pumps, etc. and he expects more contracts to be signed, over 1% of the buildings in Town. However, he also commented that the prices for heat-pumps need to come down to foster mass adoption. Mr. Pruitt noted that the HeatSmart campaign had an ancillary benefit – the creation of a website (www.heatsmartaw.com) filled with content so that the Town could continue to highlight the benefits of HeatSmart. We could also consider what Cambridge has done with solar, partnering with an outside firm, to allow residents to get quotes with pre-approved installers.

Regarding "converting natural gas equipment to electric equipment," the Committee was interested in discussing this as a long term, high level goal, provided that the electricity grid continues to become "greener" with renewable energy.

Regarding “Encourage/require residents and businesses to transition to clean heating and cooling when applying for a special permit,” the Committee removed it from the list.

Regarding providing financial incentives to encourage building owners to switch to clean heating and cooling systems, the Committee thought better marketing and technical solutions could be more feasible and perhaps the MassSave program could pick this up. The Committee removed this from the list.

Regarding “adopt a zero net carbon standard for all new buildings,” the Committee thought that the State will likely adopt this standard at some point, hopefully soon as an optional “reach” code, and that the Town should advocate for that.

Regarding “Develop a carbon emissions performance standard to decarbonize existing large buildings,” the Committee discussed building benchmarking and solar canopies above parking lots. It was noted that it may be necessary to form a subcommittee to discuss this item further.

Regarding “Provide educational and workforce clean tech opportunities,” the Committee wondered if Minuteman High School and other vocational technical schools could be a partner in this effort.

Regarding “Adopt carbon neutral construction codes,” the Committee felt this was similar to other measures on the list and could be combined with them.

Regarding “Implement a Resilient Building Retrofit Accelerator Program,” “Implement a Green Leasing Program,” “Build public-private partnerships to expand best practices for building operations and maintenance,” and “Adopt a building energy use disclosure ordinance” the Committee did not feel these measures were worth further consideration.

The Next Meeting is on December 20, 2019.

The Meeting adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

Submitted by Dave Levy.