



Clean Energy Future Committee Meeting Minutes

December 16, 2022

8:15 – 9:30 a.m.

Hybrid In-person / Remote Meeting

Members Present:

- In Person: Nellie Aikenhead, Talia Fox, David Morgan
- Remote: Amos Meeks, Dan Amstutz, Coralie Cooper (as Chair), Marc Breslow, James DiTullio, Eric Helmuth, Ryan Katofsky, Pasi Miettinen, Shelly Dein

Also attending: Patrick Hanlon, Jacob Glickel

Coralie Cooper convened the meeting at 8:15 am. C. Cooper read a brief statement noting the legislation that permits virtual meetings.

1. Welcome New Member

C. Cooper welcomed new member Amos Meeks, who is the Town Meeting Member appointee taking Dave Levy's place. A. Meeks has been involved in many aspects of the town initiatives, including Sustainable Arlington, and the CEFC is delighted to have him as a member!

2. Orientation to Hybrid Virtual/In-Person Meeting Pilot

Talia Fox laid out the basic mechanisms for the Hybrid meetings, including:

- if there is a technical failure, we will try to relaunch the meeting three times
- if we are unable to relaunch and there are more than 20 minutes left in the meeting, the CEFC will reconvene the following Friday
- if there are fewer than 20 minutes left, the CEFC will carry the remaining agenda items forward to next meeting

T. Fox and Eric Helmuth noted that this is a pilot program and candid feedback will be requested via a survey that will be emailed to CEFC members after this meeting. Please complete! Feedback will go to the Remote Participation Study committee (E. Helmuth is a member). The goal of Hybrid is an equal experience for everyone, both in person and remote.

T. Fox explained that meeting procedures are the same as if everyone was on zoom: Ryan Katofsky will monitor chat; an in-person quorum not required, just a total quorum; the meeting is being recorded as usual to ensure accuracy. Technology being used is the Neat Bar, which seems to be working well.

E. Helmuth requested more visibility – T. Fox divided screen into three, so each person in the room could be seen; the neat bar follows each person who is in the room as they move/speak.

3. Review and Approve 11/18/2022 Meeting Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the November 18, 2022 meeting. C. Cooper asked for any corrections, additions, or changes to the draft minutes. There were none of substance, just a couple of typos that were corrected. Shelly Dein moved to approve and R. Katofsky seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously approved the November 18th meeting minutes.

4. Discussion and Vote on Warrant Article for Opt-In Specialized Stretch Code

T. Fox gave a quick presentation, starting by sharing a DOER summary power point (copy attached to minutes), and making the following main points

- Reminder that there are three sets of energy efficiency codes
 - the Base Code (IECC 2021), which applies to the 52 MA municipalities that are not “green communities”; this code is not changing
 - The Stretch Code, which the 299 “green” municipalities, including Arlington, are required to follow, will be updated on January 1, 2023
 - The Specialized “Net Zero” Stretch Code, which is the most efficient, will come online in 2023, and municipalities must affirmatively vote to opt in
- Changes to the Stretch Code that apply to residential low-rise buildings (single and two families and townhouses) will be effective January 1, 2023; changes to 3+ unit buildings and commercial properties will be effective July 1, 2023; in July 2024 additional changes will be phased in
- Residential low-rise changes in requirements as of 1/1/23 (for new construction and additions of more than 1,000 sq ft) include
 - Slightly lower HERS ratings (see chart below)
 - Energy Star 3.1 rating will no longer be an option
 - Units must be EV ready
 - HRV or ERV (heat and energy recovery ventilation) required
- Mass Save incentives are available for 1-4 unit properties that go beyond Stretch Code requirements, including \$15K for all electric low rise buildings and with HERS 45 and \$25k for low rise with HERS 35 (see chart below)
- NOTE: for details on upcoming commercial requirements, and Thermal Energy Demand Intensity (TEDI) limits, and other key modifications, please look at PowerPoint
- T. Fox noted: all of the new Stretch Code requirements will happen no matter what, as Arlington already abides by that code
- Discussion is only about the Specialized (Opt-in) Stretch Code, which would require the following increases in efficiency:
 - Low rise residential have three paths to choose from (builders can choose, all three options would be available)
 - All electric or Passive House: requires HERS 45
 - Mixed fuel: requires HERS 42 + solar + wired for electric OR Passive House wired for electric
 - Zero energy HERS 0 (= HERS 42 + Solar) OR Passive House (Phius Zero)

- Exception: All new homes over 4,000 sq ft would have to be all electric or zero energy – there would be no mixed fuel option
- Additions and alterations would retain the same requirements as Stretch Code

Q&A

Question on # of teardowns: Pat Hanlon states roughly 40% of new construction is over 4,000 sq ft, and the number of teardowns varies tremendously year to year. Metric for calculating is conditioned square footage, which is different than metrics used for other purposes. In the past year, there were approximately 14 total tear downs, but there have been more in many other years. Houses are steadily getting bigger – over 4,000 sq ft homes are becoming more common. However, as a portion of overall housing stock, the percent of houses over 4,000 sq ft is relatively low.

- T. Fox noted she/CEFC will be clear about numbers when doing presentations in the new year; will lock in numbers before doing any public presentations
- Pasi Miettinen noted that obtaining a HERS score of 42 or 45 not difficult, many are building there anyway; it's essentially 20% less energy use than previous energy; builders can easily meet.
- P. Hanlon – Clarified that 42 and 45 HERS scores are the Stretch Code, and we are discussing the Specialized Stretch Code requiring all electric or zero energy (for new 4000 sq ft construction)
- T. Fox – Specialized Stretch requires Passive House standards for multi families with 5 stories or less, if there is more than 12,000 sq ft of living space; Phase in – after Jan 2024, Passive House will be required for *all* residential over 12,000 sq ft
- T. Fox - Commercial buildings other than residential, builders can choose: all electric, passive house, gas or other fossil fuels – requirements will vary depending on selection. Look at slide for details
- A. Meeks asked if solar is required to be on building as opposed to whole plot of land? What are requirements to “maximize”? T. Fox will research.
- Jacob Glickel – asked if two families are included in “low rise residential” and how square footage would be calculated; P. Hanlon clarified the 4,000 sq ft would be per unit not a total for the building

Discussion on warrant article language

- T. Fox presented draft article and explained we would be modifying the building code by adding the Specialized Stretch Code. DOER recommends doing it as a bylaw change, not just a vote of approval
- P. Hanlon made a boilerplate correction to “relative thereto”... and confirmed that if Arlington opts in, any future changes made by DOER to the Specialized will automatically apply to the Town, just the same way as changes to the Stretch Code automatically apply; the only way around future state level changes would be to opt out.
- C. Cooper checked in with CEFC members to gauge readiness to vote on supporting the proposed Warrant Article
- P. Miettinen, R. Katofsky, and S. Dein expressed readiness to vote; S. Dein noted it would be helpful to understand the rest of process/timeframe at some point... when go to Select Board, Town Meeting, public outreach, etc.

- C. Cooper agreed and suggested we dedicate time during the next meeting to discuss thoroughly
- E. Hanlon noted this is just a start and vote of support; details may change over time
- T. Fox added there is a separate working group that meets regularly to plan public outreach and the rollout of education around this article. Noted: warrant closes 1/27/23.
- R. Katofsky made motion to approve the Specialized Stretch Code article (attached to minutes); S. Dein seconded. Unanimous CEFC vote of approval.

5. Discussion on Net Zero Municipal Building Warrant Article

- C. Cooper: have been working over past year on a net zero municipal buildings warrant article. We had decided to put it on hold last year. Working group has worked out a lot of issues, but want to discuss with CEFC and possibly to put it on hold for another year, as some additional discussion and questions have come up regarding standards, along with some technical issues. Working group does not think there are new municipal buildings coming online in the next year that would be affected by the potential bylaw. There is some interaction with the Specialized Code, and it might be complicated to understand and explain these two articles and their interaction at the same time.
- T. Fox added: other thing at play is the fossil fuel ban pilot program, which Arlington plans to participate in. Although the Town must first establish a multi-family zone to be eligible to participate. If we enroll in that, new municipal buildings will be required to be all electric, regardless of the Municipal Building warrant article.
- R. Katofsky thoughts: personal bandwidth, it's a lot to be working on two articles at the same time. Could look ahead a few years, and if there are new municipal buildings coming online, we could also proactively work with Town in advance of a bylaw to achieve what we want to achieve anyway.
- C. Cooper... definitely need to update, the existing bylaw is at least a decade old; there is general agreement on all electric municipal building requirement, it's just a matter of timing.
- T. Fox: Also there is an Electrification Master Plan being completed right now for 6 school buildings, which will provide pathways for electrification for those buildings. Results will be presented in February. This will help inform which buildings will be renovated in the coming years, and this might help inform the bylaw.
- S. Dein – doesn't have her finger on the pulse of town sentiment... not sure if adopting Specialized Stretch will be problematic or not. A lot of work will need to be done with the development community, which is likely to be concerned. It would be better for the Town to do the same for its own buildings, should the question come up.
- James DiTullio – doesn't consider the municipal article terribly controversial but there is a question of bandwidth. Have been organized and informative, doing a deep dive on past articles. Although everything has passed by wide margins, we can't take wide margins of approval for granted – they are likely due to the extensive education and outreach.

- P. Hanlon – all of things we have outstanding, Stretch Code, Specialized Stretch, and Fossil Fuel Bylaw, will automatically apply to the Town when they are passed, with or without this municipal building bylaw. Also, people going to be concerned about a large override possibility – might not be the right time, raising a discussion of municipal buildings might change the discussion from climate change to municipal finance. Next year may be better.
- J. DiTullio agreed – we will have a major debate next year on an override.
- C. Coralie said these are all important considerations.
- T. Fox: there is a new addition to the Green Communities program possibly coming out in the next year. That addition may allow a municipality to comply with the program by implementing a Municipal Building bylaw. This could help to get the bylaw passed – however it is not in place at this point in time.
- Group agreed to put off a vote / hold future discussion on the municipal building bylaw.
- T. Fox: Presentation for the Electrification Master Plan scheduled for 2/13/23. Not a public meeting, need to be careful about a quorum, will ask some members to be present.

6. Moving next meeting to Jan 20, 2023.

- Warrant closes 1/27/23, which is the same date as CEFC next scheduled meeting
- T. Fox thinking we might want to meet in advance of that in case we might want to make changes to the Warrant Article
- A. Meeks – citizen side experience is that articles aren't always ready in December, might be scrambling in January, so may want to change meeting date in case something unexpected comes up
- Agreed next meeting January 20, 2023

7. Other Items

T. Fox asked that all members attending the hybrid meeting please complete virtual survey on their experience.

D. Morgan moved to end the meeting and Ms. Dein seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10.

Submitted by Nellie Aikenhead

Attachments

DOER presentation on Stretch Code

Draft warrant article on Specialized Stretch Code approved by CEFC