

Energy Committee – September 12, 2018

Meeting start: 7:00 pm

Attending: Roger Colton, Travis Franck, Marty Bitner, Don Mercier, James Booth, Yvonne Brown, Phil Thayer

Approval of Minutes: June 27th minutes were approved as amended

2018 DEC 17 AM 9:40

Review Belmont Climate Action Plan Roadmap Outreach. Roger and Marty met with Glen and Spencer and decided to draft two by-laws which have been drafted and sent to Chris at Belmont Light for feedback. The bylaws are the Emission Free resolution and the Green Buildings by-law. Both attached to the meeting agenda.

Roger mentioned that the Green Building by-law only requires people building or renovating housing and non-housing units to make them capable of being solar ready and/or capable of having an electric charging station installed. Don felt that there are already many green building codes and that adding this new by-law as a permanent requirement may create a conflict. Roger said that much time was spent making sure there was not conflict with any state or local building code, and that this is in furtherance of the Roadmap which the Energy Committee (EC) adopted. Roger has also scheduled to talk with the Planning Board around October 2 and with the Vision Implementation Committee also in October, and that at that point the EC would be ready to present to the Board of Selectman.

James met with Sustainable Belmont in the summer and will attend the next meeting on October 3 to discuss the CAP Roadmap. He's already emailed a draft of the CAP Roadmap presentation to them and has also sent it to the Town Clerk to post on the EC website page.

Roger suggests EC members should start talking to committees they are comfortable talking to about the CAP Roadmap but to coordinate who is talking to which committee. We should not require permission to reach out to committees to promote the Roadmap.

Roger would like to get a resolution on the public agenda before Town Meeting, to have a series of public meetings to talk about Strategic Electrification. It would be a good idea to have a series of three or four public meetings on the role of the municipal light department to promote emissions reductions. One topic suggested was "The Role of the small town addressing global warming". Topics would vary but the focus would be on the Roadmap. These would happen at the Beech Street Center or the Town Auditorium between now and Town Meeting in April/May.

Travis makes a motion to support taking the next step to develop a proposal for the series of meetings. It is seconded and approved unanimously. Roger and Yvonne will meet to plan the first meeting/forum. Phil mentioned that Bill Lovallo is doing an Energy Forum beginning of October and would like someone from EC to talk briefly about the Roadmap. This would be a 5-10 minute talk. James mentioned that the entire Building Committee will be there.

Regarding the traditional media outreach, Yvonne will meet with Roger and she will develop a marketing plan and calendar for outreach which would include social media, letters to editors etc. Roger makes a motion that we start reaching out to the public. It was seconded and approved unanimously.

There is a discussion as to how much approval is required for communications. The decision was that communications that promote concepts and ideas that are already in the Roadmap do not need approval from the EC. Travis recommends we watch the open meeting law sessions online as to what we can publish and James says that individual members of the EC are allowed to express their support in public. Roger mentions that by the end of the week Belmont will ask for a grant for heat pumps and the EC needs to get behind this to promote it too. Roger makes a motion asking Yvonne to be the Communications person for the EC. It is seconded and approved unanimously.

Travis says he and Tony talked to the webperson in the High School Building Committee about their website. It is running through the town website and used the same web vendor as the town website. Yvonne will get in touch with Tony. Travis also met with Chris in the Town Hall and he was willing to have another conversation.

Roger hopes to present the Emission Free resolution to the Special Town meeting in mid November. This is in support of the CAP Roadmap goal of having Belmont Light use emission free energy by 2022 and he worked on it with Chris Roy. Roger mentioned that Chris has said that if the community and the Town says it is important, he will work with his staff and the Light Board Advisory Committee to achieve that goal. This resolution will give Chris direction he needs as he wants to act in support of the community.

James discusses the last words of the resolution "as soon as it is economically feasible" due to concerns about who will decide what cost for clean energy is acceptable. There is discussion among the group about the phrase and whether it is too open or controversial. Travis proposes to add a phrase such as "with consideration of town input" – but he will get back to the EC with a suggested phrase. Marty says that we need a phrase that conveys that we are aware of possible economic constraints. Roger says that the objective of the resolution is to move the Roadmap forward, and that we could have a public forum e.g. "What does it mean to be an emissions free Utility" before the special town meeting in November. James and Don talk about how people may want to understand better the impact on cost. Roger says that any changes to Attachment A need to be worked on with Chris. Roger makes a motion to present the Emission Free resolution (Attachment A) in the Special Town Meeting. It was seconded and unanimously approved.

Roger will be talking to the Selectmen about the Roadmap too as this is necessary for them to understand the Emission Resolution.

Roger says that the Energy Disclosure by-law requires people selling a house to disclose an energy rating for the home and is very focused on single family residences. Don says he would be against that because the seller may not know what they are selling because a house may have multiple complex issues and it becomes an additional cost for the buyer. Travis says that there is already an energy audit that scores a specific list of things and that there are qualified trained people such as Mass Save and others who can conduct the audits. Don says buyers already have a lot of inspections to do, and asks why the seller should provide an energy score by law as there are lots of inspections that are optional but not required by law. Roger says that the energy rating of the house could influence a purchase decision. Don does not agree.

Travis makes a motion that the EC continue to consider and develop the Green Building by law further with the town. Seconded and approved unanimously.

Marty makes a motion that the EC move forward with the Energy Discloser Score disclosure even though this is not the final language. Seconded and approved by four EC members with one opposed.

Regarding the Roadmap resolution for the Annual Town Meeting, Roger says it is time to start drafting the resolution. James says the current draft has three targets and that affirming the targets will be the goal of the resolution. The objective will be to get the Town to support these goals. Roger says that we need to be clear on what we want to achieve in the Town Meeting. James says that we want it to guide the kind of projects we should be driving.

Quick reports.

Marty/James regarding Belmont High School energy – specifically excluded solar and geothermal from the Mass grant which is good as Belmont can now seek grants for these elsewhere and use the entire \$80M for other expenses. Phil mentioned the importance of the School incorporating the purchase of RECs for \$5K per year, that would result in a payback of \$10K. Phil mentioned that the building is on the pathway of being a Zero Net Energy building.

Marty mentioned that Belmont Drives Electric is having a big event this weekend.

The heat pump promotion team is working with the CEC to choose installers etc much like had done for the Belmont Goes Solar campaign. Becca, Adrian and James are working on a proposal for a meeting with the Board of Selectman tomorrow. The town needs to sign up and support this. Travis mentioned the money is for 2019 and that the campaign starts with the installer selection in December 2018. James mentioned it ties well with the Roadmap program. The grants are only to run the campaign for heat pumps. This program has been done in seven towns and we can learn from them. This is not an EC managed group.

Roger submitted a grant to provide marketing money for roadside composting. Julie Wu in the Food Collaborative is running the campaign. The Proposal was attached to the agenda.

Travis talks about the Belmont Light Board Advisory Committee (LBAC). He met in August with the Light Board to discuss the LBAC mission of providing electricity. They are doing a cost of service study. Belmont Light will release the conclusions of the study results in a public meeting on Sept 26. There is a new LBAC committee member, Dave Beavers. The incinerator site is moving forward (this is not an EC project). Solar is still a possibility and high on the list. He had proposed reaching out to LBAC but wants to discuss first with Chris what happens next after the study i.e. presenting the roadmap and what else should Chris look at. The Sept 26 meeting is a good opportunity to bring up the solar analysis. The LBAC power supply policy is getting revised in order to tighten the language. Edits are posted on the LBAC website.

Travis proposed another topic for discussion in the next EC meeting: Should the Belmont Community pledge that it still follows the Paris Agreement.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm.