

DATE: December 8, 2020
TIME: 3:10 PM

Belmont Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2020

Present: Adrienne Allen, Claus Becker, Marty Bitner, James Booth, Cabell Eames, Travis Franck, Brian Kopperl, Don Mercier, Greg Piotrowicz, Alex Thurston. Guests: Phil Thayer, Tony Barnes.

The meeting, held by Zoom, came to order at 7 PM. The minutes from the September meeting were approved.

Website

Greg noted that outgoing website administrator Yvonne Brown had walked him through the belmontclimateaction.org website.

Action item for all committee members: look over the website and send suggested updates to Greg.

There was discussion around whether the name of the Energy Committee should be changed to better reflect its actual mission (mitigation of climate change). Alex raised the question of whether the mandate of the EC is primarily for residents or whether there is anything for businesses as well. Some suggestions of possible additions for the website:

- case studies re cost effectiveness (e.g. for technologies like heat pumps) and local examples.
- Providing a link to MassCEC's new home electrification page
- James will look into following up with participants in last year's HeatSmart Belmont campaign (some of whom have now experienced a year of heating with heat pumps) to consider soliciting feedback/testimonials.
- Links to sources of energy audits
- Information regarding health benefits of removing gas combustion

Don expressed the view that the Committee should be promoting replacement of appliances in existing buildings when they reach the end of their lifespan and increasing use of electric dryers.

Don also suggested that new Belmont Light customers should receive a package with relevant information about energy conservation. James noted that BL staff have discussed putting together such a package; he will check with Ben Thivierge about the current status.

Alex asked whether there is an accounting of CO₂ emissions reduction impact of each Energy Committee initiative.

Adrienne raised the possibility of BL doing a bill insert once a year about electrification and other climate mitigation initiatives. Brian will inquire with Ben about this.

Adrienne note that we should include time in the next Committee meeting for discussion about social media platforms.

Emissions-free resolution

Marty went through the current thinking on a possible emissions-free resolution for new construction in Belmont. He noted that the plan would be for such a resolution to be finalized by early 2021 for introduction at Spring Town Meeting. He will send around a draft of a proposed resolution.

Town Committees – EC representation

Regarding positions for Energy Committee members on the Structural Change Impact Group (which is working toward a January 2021 preliminary report) and the Long-Term Capital Planning Committee, Travis agreed to take on the role of EC representative on the former and Claus on the latter.

Gas mower ban

The idea of a ban on gas powered mowers was floated. It was noted that former Energy Committee Chair Ian Todreas is currently gathering information on such initiatives taking place in other towns, and was suggested that the committee invite Ian to share his findings.

Standing reports

McLean Development: the question was raised of how to encourage Belmont Light to move forward with a solar leasing agreement for the new McLean development. Travis said it could be put on the LBAC agenda for discussion. Brian will continue conversations with both the developer and Belmont Light. Travis will reach out to John Abe as a professional with expertise in such solar arrangements.

Chenery Solar: Phil reported that paperwork had been signed.