

Belmont Energy Committee Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2016

2016 FEB 11 AM 8:56

Attending: Roger Colton, Ian Todreas, Donald Mercier, James Booth, Jan Kruse and Tony Barnes.
Guests: John Marzec, Phil Thayer and Jenny Marusiak.

Co-chair Roger Colton opened the meeting at 8:05AM.

1. **October 2015 meeting minutes** were unanimously approved.
2. **James Booth** gave an overview of the town's updated greenhouse gas inventory (updated through Dec. 2014 and comparison with first inventory from 2007). He noted that the electricity held steady, residential and municipal fuel oil consumption was down more than 40% while natural gas was up; and transportation was up, due to residential sector which appears due to more households with two cars. He noted that the cars currently in use may be more efficient in mileage, assuming more older cars are now off the road, but that would be an assumption. Jan Kruse suggested we also include information about public transit numbers. Ian Todreas noted that bus numbers can be captured through the MBTA and that a volunteer had done counts during three peak ridership times at the Belmont Center commuter rail station and that she was planning to do the same at the Waverley train stop. James will contact her to get her information. James noted that the low-hanging fruit at this point is transportation and asked if the committee should consider a transportation subcommittee to tackle that sector. Roger Colton said that the inventory reinforces for him that we should be working with other groups in town on reducing single occupancy transportation numbers, such as Be Well Belmont, Sustainable Belmont, Safe Routes to School, Mothers Out Front, the Traffic Advisory Committee and the Public Health Nurse. Roger said he thought the Energy Committee should convene a meeting with such groups. Jan said that one issue was that the goal of 80% reduction by 2050 was really difficult for people to get their heads around and suggested that the Energy Committee might suggest interim goals. Don Mercier said we would need to identify action items to meet various goals. He suggested one item: that all municipal vehicles change to using propane. Jan also suggested that this would be a good opportunity to address Town Meeting with updated inventory numbers since we have not reported back to them since the committee was established in 2009. Roger that we include broader aspirational goals as well as specific action steps. Tony Barnes said he thought it was important to connect people in town and build consensus on action among groups. Roger asked Jan to approach David Kale with a request to give a brief presentation at the May 2016 annual Town Meeting.
3. **Leadership positions:** Roger Colton noted that Ian Todreas stepped down as co-chair at the end of Dec. Roger said he was still willing to serve as co-chair or sole chair or turn the role over to someone else on the committee. Jan Kruse was still willing to serve as vice-chair or step aside. The committee decided to vote on leadership roles at our next monthly meeting. Roger also noted that Jacob Knowles has resigned his position so that we have an opening for a residential position on the committee.
4. **Green Communities grant for the town.** John Marzec, Supervisor of Contracts Management for the Belmont Facilities Department, gave the committee an update re: progress toward meeting the energy efficiency grant from the state. The grant was \$151,850 and the money must be spent by June 30, 2016. John noted that spending it

would not be a problem. The money will be spent on a new energy system at the Chenery Middle School and also energy efficiency improvements at Belmont High School as well as installing heat pumps at the DPW facility. Due to the inefficiency of current systems, the payback should be less than 2 years. Roger Colton asked if there was a role for the Energy Committee or the public re: the improvements? John said it was a good question and he did not know the answer. Tony Barnes suggested that the Energy Committee could be helpful in education and creating political will. John agreed those actions could be helpful. Tony said that we would need metrics and benefits affiliated with those metrics. Jan asked for an update on the state grant that Belmont Light had received re: switching street lights to LEDs, also expiring on June 30, 2016. John noted that they were behind schedule and because many of the street lights were high pressure 70 watt sodium bulbs, the financial savings will be minimal with a 10-12 year payback after conversion.

5. **Solarize Belmont program.** Roger asked guest Phil Thayer to give an update on the Belmont Goes Solar campaign. Phil said that the goal was 100 solar rooftops installed in 2016 and that the first Meet the Installer [Direct Energy Solar] workshop was that night. Don Mercier asked if a business leasing a building could put solar panels on? Phil noted that Belmont Goes Solar was focusing on owning panels due to the better financial incentives for owners. He also said people were welcome to choose another installer. Roger noted that as of Jan. 12, there had been 10 sales. Ian Todreas asked what is the greenhouse gas emissions reduction if we meet 100 solar rooftop installations. Phil said that he would need to look it up and get the information to the committee.
6. **Update on Energy Committee goal-setting and collecting info/data on accomplishments for new CAP.** Tony Barnes gave a brief overview of actions completed and those in progress and suggested the following priorities for the group for 2016:
 - A. Communication strategy:
 - i. Define and revitalize "a dedicated community based education and outreach campaign"
 - ii. Specific suggestions: School program, Town Meeting Member support, Updated website presence; develop a business network
 - B. Support solar by shepherding Belmont Goes Solar
 - C. Small targeted, measureable, visible projects
 - i. identify and support or execute projects that can move the needle re: CO2 in a measurable way with manageable time from specific committee members, ideally leveraging existing infrastructure or opportunities. This could be done by promoting use of residential appliance rebates, promoting commercial and institutional audits and rebate use, electric vehicle charging station opportunity. Roger thanked Tony for his analysis and suggestions. All members will review and we will discuss suggested actions at our next meeting.
7. The meeting was adjourned at 9:17AM by Roger Colton.

Minutes written and submitted by Jan Kruse.