



Sustainability, Energy  
& Resiliency Committee  
City of Salem, MA

**DRAFT INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY  
(NOT MINUTES – NO FORMAL MEETING)**

**January 25, 2023 6:30 P.M.  
Remote Participation**

As the zoom link on the posted Agenda is not working, no official meeting can be held. However, the Chair feels that it is important to share updates from the City Council Liaison and SAFE, so notes recording this informal information session follow.

A motion to hold an informal informational session, rather than a meeting, is made by Chris Cantone, seconded by Erin Casey, and passes 6-0.

**Board Members Present**

John Hayes, Chair  
Chris Cantone, Vice Chair  
Rick Nye  
Erin Casey  
Doug Bowker  
Elvis Alvarez

**City Staff Present:**

Stacy Kilb, Sustainability Engagement Coordinator (recorder)  
Jeff Cohen, City Council Liaison – Outgoing  
Andy Varela – City Council Liaison – Incoming

**Absent**

Vanessa Pineda, Energy Manager  
Jack Nessen  
Phil Koch\*

\*Stepping down



## Public:

SATV (recording)

Pat Gozemba, SAFE

Esmeralda Bisono, Emerald Cities collaborative

## Introductions

### City Council Liaison Update: Jeff Cohen – Final Report

New City Council Liaison introduction

- Jeff Cohen outlines his experience and is glad that Andy Varela will be the Chair of the City Council Committee on Public Health, Safety and Environment (PHSE)
- Before the Council:
  - **Specialized Opt-In Code.** The Stretch Code issued by DOER is mandatory, but not perfect. The Specialized Code is opt-in and up to the City Council to adopt. Jeff will meet with SAFE, the Mayor, and Inspectional Services about this. If adopted, Tom St. Pierre to put in the budget for someone with more experience.
    - Jeff put up an order to discuss in the PHSE committee. He is on this Committee, and Andy Chairs it. He will meet with City staff first. The specialized code enables the community to get closer to its targets from the 2021 Roadmap Bill with GHG emission targets. We are moving toward zero-carbon minimum standard in Opt-in code.
    - It contains language so that there is code to ensure that whatever solar is possible on the property is being installed in new developments or retrofits.
    - EV charging – Wiring must be in place. The City has spent ARPA funds on two out of the three stages: covid relief, housing relief, the AHTFB, and now the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage allows the community to spend it on sustainability and resiliency projects. David Rodrigues, who manages ARPA funding, said he would want some projects have ROI or savings.
      - Ex. Turbines in water pipes. Portland, OR spent \$1.7 million on a stretch of water pipes and generated \$2.1 million worth of electricity this way in the first year.
      - Solar: Entities that can't take advantage of the tax credit, such as a nonprofit or a City, can lease solar instead. If you own the solar, you own all the electricity produced so could have savings more than what you spent.
  - Last Year's climate bill has a pilot program for 10 communities to apply to DOER to have Ordinances written to eliminate future fossil fuel installations. Each must have a Home Rule petition. He put this in front of Council last year and it passed. 24 communities have put up this petition.
  - A state senator and a representative will sponsor a bill that would make the 10 community pilot moot by allowing any community with a population of over 50,000, EJ communities, and others, able to do this.
  - Brookline, Watertown, and Cambridge have adopted the Specialized Opt-In code.
- Green Building Ordinance: Jeff is getting close to going before the Council, but will bring to SERC first. It may go to the PHSE.



- Not sure if it will include language about fossil fuel installations.
- Andy and Jeff to work with Janelle Rolke and Dave Knowlton to make recycling ordinance and waste reduction ordinances implementable and enforceable, which is not possible now.
- Lee Fort Terrace, Canal St. Station (Bertini's), and the Crescent Lot developments will have to go before SERC.

Andy Varela:

- His intent as PHSE chair is to discuss all topics Jeff brought up.
- Municipal GBO, specialized code, and recycling ordinance are priorities.
- Introduced a new compost ordinance last meeting. Start w/municipal and school buildings. Also important to teach our kids about composting but that may be too much to ask at first.
  - Want to align ourselves with state target reductions in organic waste, reduced from 1 ton to 1000 lbs per week for commercial entities. Must find a compost program if more than 1000 lbs per week.
  - Businesses will see benefits when they adopt this.

Some discussions in PHSE may interest people; he is trying to get more public participation, and meetings are open to the public. PHSE meetings are irregular but he wants to set up meetings within the next 6 weeks, and have a couple of these items on the Agenda. Will prioritize GBO.

Chris Cantone asks:

- Mandate to install solar on available space: does this mean that a new HS would have to have solar canopies in parking lots even if it is cost prohibitive?
  - The Specialized Code is confusing. This is not so much a mandate as identifying a solar zone. Re the GBO: solar canopies would be good for Salem, but the non-municipal GBO would take precedence over code, and it would mandate for solar or a green roof, however if HVAC systems would get in the way, it does not mandate anything on the parking lot as this would be an initiative separate from an ordinance.
  - This is similar to the NY Title 94 and CA Green Roof policy
    - [www1.nyc.gov/assets/buildings/pdf/green\\_roof\\_solar\\_1192-n-94of2019\\_sn.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/buildings/pdf/green_roof_solar_1192-n-94of2019_sn.pdf)
    - <https://sfplanning.org/project/better-roofs#:~:text=Effective%20January%201st%2C%202017%2C%20San,or%20a%20combination%20of%20both.>
- Has the City begun discussions around electrification of municipal fleets and school buses?
  - Jeff and Andy note that the Police Department purchased its first EV. EVs are not mandated in the GBO but capacity at new buildings and retrofits will be mandated.
  - Stacy Kilb notes the 2022 Fleet Electrification Assessment done by ICF, and the Municipal Green Building Ordinance requirements. [NGRID - FASP Report - Salem 2.10.22.pdf](#)
  - 85% of people who have an EV also have a gas car b/c there is no capacity to charge in public
  - Tesla has many high-speed chargers but they are exclusive to that brand.
  - Legislation that all cars have software available so people can find chargers, and those that produce cars and chargers provide adaptability for any car may be forthcoming.



- NGrid telephone pole program pilot for 10 communities.
- We don't have capacity to charge the EVs that are coming down the road, so to speak.
- Chris disagrees on some parts. He notes that CA is scaling back their goal of having only EVs purchased by 2030. He would like to discuss w/Jeff.
- Can Jeff explain what is the current process to select and change a Liaison to a Committee?
  - Many available boards have slots for liaisons that are not filled.
  - The liaison potentially changes every year.
  - The City Clerk distributes a sheet, and each councilor in December must list the 3 City Boards they would want to be liaison for and which subcommittees of City council they want to be on. The City Council president makes that decision.
  - We now have 10 councilors w/Bob McCarthy acting mayor. Each Councilor can max out at 3 boards, but some councilors only have 1 board.
  - The rule in Council is that, whether full or committee, if you have a meeting at same time as your Board meeting you must go to the Council or subcommittee meeting, not the board for which you are liaison. Jeff only went to 35% of Planning Board meetings last year.
  - Chris would like to see the Council rotate these positions so people who don't know as much can get familiar with SERC. We can't achieve anything within the City as we have no responsibilities. He mentioned solar at the High School because people wanted to develop Shetland Park, and they presented but we never had anyone from the HS.
  - Why do private developers come in, but City projects do not?

**Guest Speaker: Bonnie Bain, Offshore Wind Program Manager, Salem Alliance For the Environment (SAFE):  
A Review of Current Initiatives**

- SAFE history and EJ (Environmental Justice)
  - First formed to focus on shutting down coal fired power plant 20 years ago.
  - Ensure that those most impacted by climate change and pollution are at the center of their work.
  - Salem meets all EJ criteria. Median income, minorities, lacking English language proficiency, annual household in municipality does not exceed 150% of state median income.
- Gas transition
  - Historically created programming re gas leaks, worked w/Marcos Luna at SSU to analyze them.
  - Members of Gas Transition Allies.
  - BCNS opposition to Peabody Peaker.
  - Most gas are leaks in the Point, an EJ community.
  - Pushing for all electric offshore wind port.
  - Local options for networked geothermal.
- Offshore Wind & Salem
  - History
  - Big Picture
    - Advocating to make sure that 200 jobs go to residents of Salem and the North Shore.
  - Advocacy & Action
    - Get involved in any of SAFE's working groups (Wind or other, all meet monthly),
  - Community Engagement



- Promoting free wind summer camp running again this year (KidWind <https://salemsafe.org/2022/09/30/wind-energy-summer-camp/> )
- Make it accessible and make people aware of opportunities.
- Up Next
  - MEPA Review period, public comment periods for wind project
  - BOEM (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management) Gulf of ME draft call for area presentations
  - April: Earth Day Presentations w/Salem State
  - Summer: Field Trips, in-person engagement
  - KidWind Offshore Wind Academy Promotion July 23-28, teachers can go as well, Southeast MA area
- Stay Involved: Working Groups
  - Research
  - Labor & Education
  - Legislative & Regulatory
  - Communications

John Hayes asks about the status of the community benefits agreement.

[https://www.salemma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf7986/f/uploads/community\\_benefits\\_agreementfinal.pdf](https://www.salemma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf7986/f/uploads/community_benefits_agreementfinal.pdf)

Pat Gozemba, audience member, notes in the chat that we should electrify school buses and the trolley. We should access the same sources of funding as Cambridge used to electrify their trolley.

John Hayes wonders about the disadvantages of having a City government in transition, with an acting Mayor, at this time.

Jeff Cohen notes that the Port Authority/Seth Lattrell control everything that has to do with the Port and are heavily involved in wind. Bob McCarthy has been on that board and a regular attendee and is extremely knowledgeable. He has been very involved in the Footprint plant-to-wind turbine marshalling area.

Bonnie Bain feels that most of our leaders are accessible. There is an idea that this may be different than Footprint, maybe with less pressure to create something, but SAFE does expect an official CBA process where they're at the table, along with Salem Sound Coastwatch, the Latino Leadership Coalition, etc., as they are educators. This is a new industry at our port, and we need to make sure our community benefits.

BCNS (Breathe Clean North Shore) presented to SERC last summer and the one before. John notes that SERC was supportive of BCNS efforts. Bonnie Bain notes that Salem's City Council wrote in on the issue as well.

Chris Cantone notes that the large influx of power from wind will impact grid stability; what will MA do to combat that much load coming in at one point? How can SERC help address that? Bonnie Bain notes that Chris should join the Research Working Group.

## City Updates

Hiring of Sustainability & Resiliency Department Director: New Director will start Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>. Neal Duffy's qualifications can be seen here: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/neal-duffy/>



Energy Manager Project Updates (Vanessa Pineda)

Open Space & Recreation Plan (John Hayes)

Andy Varela hopes to have the compost ordinance run by SERC; members are happy to help.

Andy Varela and Jeff Cohen will let SERC know when items of interest are in front of Council in case members want to testify. This can be done in person or by email.

### **New Business**

New SERC Member:

Jack Nessen

Vote on 2023 meeting schedule: 4<sup>th</sup> Monday except for Nov. 8<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>

### **Public Comment**

~~February Invited Speaker: (t) Brian Pzeny, Assistant Water Registrar, Sustainability of Salem/Beverly Water Supply~~

~~Approve Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2022~~

### **Upcoming City Committee Meetings**

**Recycling Committee:** First Tuesday of the month, 2/7/23, 6:30-7:30PM

**Tree Commission:** Monday, 2/13, 6:00 PM (Typically the third Monday of the month, which is Presidents' Day in February)

**Conservation Commission:** Third Tuesday of the month, 2/21/23, 6:30PM

### **Upcoming Events**

Understanding Your Electric Bill and Salem PowerChoice: Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 6:00PM on zoom: Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83608217120?pwd=cG9KK2czS2pCeI9iYjNWc2VNclFuUT09>

Password: 905356

**Next SERC Meeting** - Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, at 6:30PM on zoom

### **Adjournment**

n/a

