



Sustainability, Energy
& Resiliency Committee
City of Salem, MA

Meeting Minutes

June 24, 2020 – 6:30pm

Remote Participation

In Attendance: John Hayes, Jeff Cohen, Doug Bowker, Esmeralda Bisono (City staff), Jenna Ide (City staff)

Not in Attendance: Phil Koch, Chris Cantone, Rick Nye, Gail Kubik, Meg Riccardi (Council Liaison)

Public: Pat Gozemba (Salem Alliance for the Environment “SAFE” Co-Chair), Nathan Young (City’s Sustainability Intern), SATV, Stan Franzeen

Introductions

Public Comment

- Pat Gozemba, SAFE – Thank you to SERC for participating in the RMI Building Electrification Accelerator program starting at 1:00pm tomorrow.

Review & Approve Meeting Minutes

- The Committee did not reach quorum, thus cannot vote on any matters. This agenda item is tabled until the next meeting.

Ordinance Updates

- Jeff Cohen – Thank you to SERC members for leaving comments and edits to the draft Green Building Ordinance. The best steps to take to get this through the City Council is to request that the council liaison, Meg Riccardi, submit the ordinance to the council. Then it will be deferred to the sub-committee PHSE where City staff, organization leaders, council members, and the public can weigh in and leave comments on the ordinance.
- Jeff Cohen will now reach out to Meg Riccardi on next steps and will continue to update SERC.

Overview of the City Council Committee Meeting on Public Health, Safety, and Environment (PHSE)

- John Hayes - There was a PHSE Committee meeting on June 9, 2020 led by Councilor Dibble, SERC, and SAFE regarding a draft gas ban on new construction. This ordinance would create a plan for municipal infrastructure and use in the City of Salem for new construction projects.
 - There was some confusion on what step of the process the draft ban is currently on.
 - Pat Gozemba, SAFE – Pat asked Steve if he would hold off on pushing discussion on the gas ordinance until he has a meeting with the Rocky Mountain Institute since we are potentially drafting another similar ordinance.

Project Updates

- **Solarize Mass Plus – Final Results – Esmeralda Bisonso**
 - Thank you to everyone who helped make this program a success! We could not have done it without the efforts of the public, volunteers, City staff, and SERC members.

- The Solar Coaches are currently in the process of purchasing gift cards which total over \$3,000 worth. We will contact individuals to see if they prefer it online or physical in the next week or so.
- Final Installation Metrics
 - Solar PV: 39 total contracts signed: 24 in Salem, 8 in Swampscott, 7 in Nahant
 - Air Source Heat Pumps: 18 total contracts signed: 14 in Salem, 4 in Swampscott
 - Solar Hot Water: 21 total contracts signed: 15 in Salem, 3 in Swampscott, 3 in Nahant
- **Beverly & Salem Climate Action Plan – Jenna Ide**
 - The Mayors of Salem and Beverly along with the selection committee, which consists of City staff in Salem and Beverly, have chosen Kim Lundgren Associates (KLA) to be our consultant in developing the Climate Action & Resilience Plan.
 - The first steps are to gather Greenhouse Gas Emissions as a baseline for how we want to set this plan up.
 - We are forming a Climate Action Advisory Committee (CAAC) that will consist of a diverse group of representatives across both Cities. We would like one member of SERC to be in this committee. All members of SERC will be heavily involved in this process, but we only need one representative to be part of the meetings. We have not figured out how many meetings we will have throughout the process with the entire committee that will consist of up to 30 people, 15 reps from each City. But we will have sub-committees that focus on certain areas of the Action Plan, which members of SERC can be a part of as well.
 - The team is looking to involve as many demographics as possible, including diverse ranges of race, age, education, geography, etc., to provide input for the plan that will help Salem reach the Massachusetts Net Zero Energy goal by 2050.
 - John Hayes – I am on the RMI Building Electrification Accelerator Committee now and because of my expertise and interest in climate action planning I would prefer to be an official SERC liaison for the climate action planning and to NOT be

the official SERC liaison for RMI - BEA. I propose that Doug be the official SERC liaison if he is willing.

- Jeff Cohen – This plan is the perfect platform to provide more information on the financial benefits of making a home or business more energy efficient. Many utility companies have created the myth that being more sustainable is too costly, which simply is not true.

- **MVP Action Grant – Jenna Ide**

- The City has applied for the **Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant** for funding to go towards two projects: the Final design, permitting, and phase I construction of Forest River Park Pool AND the phase I construction of the Willows “Hill” Restoration Project. The City should receive confirmation of award by September 2020.

- **Bertram – Revolving Fund for Solar – Jenna Ide**

- This agenda item is regarding the Footprint funding from the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) that we discussed at the last meeting
- This funding could be used towards the Solar PV array at Bertram Field which we are having trouble finding funds for currently. Bertram field has sustainability and energy efficiency goals throughout the plan - pervious pavement, air source heat pumps, raingarden, sustainable materials, possible solar PV, makes the location almost net zero energy.
 - John Hayes – Bertram Field, once construction is complete, is a great high-traffic location to include education on these sustainable features, possibly through a plaque or other means.
 - Jenna Ide – Yes, we will have a plaque or other educational sources on site.
- Jenna Ide would like assistance from a SERC member, particularly Chris Cantone, on calculating the potential savings through solar net metering. The goal is to use

revolving money and a mechanism to put that money back through Solar at Bertram. The Mayor also mentioned a possible location for Solar PV could be the Community Life Center, which would have to put out to bid.

- John Hayes – At the Community Life Center, would the solar be through a canopy or on the roof?
 - Jenna Ide – Not sure yet, we could investigate different options.
- Jeff Cohen – Net metering may not be enough to pay that money back, but it could send extra solar power to another meter.
- Jeff Cohen and John Hayes will work on a letter to the Mayor to support this initiative.

New Business

- Doug Bowker – Regarding the overall mandate of SERC: to what degree do we periodically review the City’s recycling program? Even though recyclables are going into the bin, it does not seem likely that all of it is getting recycled.
 - Jeff Cohen – Having been the recycling coordinator, it depends on the hauler. They do send the recycling through sorters and can pull out coppers and certain metals. The problem is two-fold: 1. the places that communities in America would normally send their recycling, like China, are now not accepting it and 2. there are financial problems in Salem. In the past, recycling was less costly than trash but now it is the opposite because of the level of contamination and the need to separate it all. We have increased recycling significantly when we did single stream, but it enhances the level of contamination.
 - City Council is voting for an increase in the budget to hone into recycling. Perhaps looking into a regional approach, but each city has different contracts with recycling companies that make a joint approach difficult.

- Doug Bowker – Has there been any discussions on educational initiatives? Some people throw things in that can't be recycled, even though they have the right intentions, it could cause harm. I'm wondering how the average person recycles.
 - Jeff Cohen – We do have a large recycling committee that deals with this. We could invite them on to the SERC meeting next month to discuss the recycling program in Salem and how they educate the public.
 - Doug Bowker - One thought on education is to produce a low-cost, simple video on what and how to recycle.
 - Jeff Cohen – We do have videos!

Upcoming Events

Next Meeting – July 22, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. via Zoom

Adjournment

- The Committee did not reach quorum, thus cannot vote on any matters. There was no official adjournment.

The meeting ended at 7:40 P.M. Minutes respectfully submitted by Esmeralda Bisono.