

Sustainability Energy and Resiliency Committee (SERC)

Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2022, 6:30 P.M.

Remote Participation

Attendance

Chair John Hayes

Phil Koch

Chris Cantone

Rick Nye

Jeff Cohen, City Council liaison

City Staff:

Jenna Ide, Director, Sustainability and Resiliency Department & Capital Projects

Vanessa Pineda, Energy Manager

Stacy Kilb, Sustainability Engagement Coordinator (recorder)

Chris Malstrom, Lead Outreach Coordinator

Not Present

Esmeralda Bisono, Manager, Sustainability and Resiliency Dept.

Vice Chair Gail Kubik

Board Member Doug Bowker

Public

Elvis G.A.

Pat (SATV)

Susan Smoller, Breathe Clean North Shore

Michael Corley (SSU Student)

Andy Varela, Ward 7 Councilor

Bruce Cohen

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Introductions

Public Comment

Susan Smoller, Breathe Clean North Shore

- Peabody resident and founding member, BCNS re Peabody Peaker Plant
- Make an example: don't invest in fossil fuels if you don't want to
- Letter writing
- Requesting:
 - Health Assessment



- Comprehensive MEPA Review. They just did a notification form, were not required at the time to do full review
- Started construction, we don't have information and there are hurdles w/transparency
- Thrilled that Peaker Plant is on the Agenda
- Jenna reminds people: The Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) does not invest in efficiency programs that reduce the need for peaker plants, incentives for solar and other renewables are not as good
- Don't need to add new capacity if you reduce the amount of energy needed through efficiency programs. Municipal electric districts have lower rates but also lower energy efficiency
- Michael Corley is here with other students, appreciative of Committee's work, planning to attend meetings to learn more

Jeff Cohen notes changes to Mass Save incentives

- Still considering if Municipally owned communities will be included, should decide by next month, would be a significant increase
- Rebates no longer dependent on original heat source
- Entire home will get \$10K, including apts and condos as long as they have independent meters
- Incentives also available for commercial properties

Review & Approve Meeting Minutes – December 15, 2021

No quorum; minutes to be addressed at a later meeting

City Updates

Report from Ordinance, Licenses & Legal Affairs (OLLA) Committee 1/6/22 (Jenna Ide)

- Municipal Green Building Ordinance voted favorably out of Committee, passed City Council once unanimously, up again tomorrow night for final passage
- Addresses City of Salem buildings and private properties
- SERC is referenced for large developments who would need to present/obtain SERC comments and City projects over a certain size would also need SERC Review
 - Joint meeting w/Planning Board and City Council will be scheduled to review zoning changes re private development
- Purchasing Agent required to establish and Environmentally Preferable Products program, present to SERC and update every two years
- Jeff Cohen expects City Council to pass GBO unanimously
 - Accounting to go to SERC
 - Certain waivers to go to SERC
- John Hayes comments that students can play a role as SERC always has projects
- Chris Cantone congratulates everyone on the hopeful passage of the GBO
 - Add'l SERC involvement is good, but he wonders who enforces items brought before SERC. Jenna Ide explains that there is no enforcer, but Purchasing is supposed to make Plan and come to SERC, so they would perhaps have a



- checkbox for SERC verification of environmentally preferable products.
- Ordinance cannot refer to a City Department to enforce it.
- Re private developers: ZBA or Planning Board enforces permitting process
- Non-municipal: private GBO not submitted to Council yet. Green Infrastructure will be in joint meeting
- Once in front of City Council, they can decide who has what jurisdiction; can take whatever Ordinance is before them and he intends SERC to be part of the process. Non-municipal Ordinance will face a lot more pushback as they have already reached out to developers and realtors
- Municipal GBO was to serve as a template

Discuss “Resilient Together: The Point” Community Forum #1 1/26/22 (Esmeralda Bisono)

- Chris Malstrom presents as Esmeralda Bisono is absent
- Forum was well attended and had good feedback for consideration in outreach plan
- All project materials and recording of forum are available at:
<https://publicinput.com/thepoint>
- John Hayes notes that the project was created b/c Environmental Justice (EJ) communities can be left out and their public input must be part of the resilience process. This is Salem’s attempt to get their input and do resiliency planning
 - We must also think about adaptation planning
 - Woods Hole used Mentimeter for real-time public input
- March: Community Mapping Event in Point Neighborhood to ID points susceptible to flooding/climate change to help guide the City’s Plan
- Second Community Forum towards the end of April
- Rick Nye attended the Forum and appreciated the interactive-ness of it. John Hayes agrees

Update on Building Electrification Alliance (BEA) (Esmeralda Bisono)

Postponed to March meeting

New Business

Discussion and vote on remote meeting through July 15, 2022

Postponed to March meeting. Board members please consider.

Discuss “An ordinance to amend an Ordinance relative to establishing regulations for sustainable food ware and packaging.” (Jenna Ide)

- Jeff Cohen notes additional Ordinances:
 - Green Infrastructure
 - Urban Agriculture
- Salem would be the 48th or 49th community to pass such an Ordinance. Want to eliminate expanded polystyrene from recycling and solid waste stream as it is problematic – hard to recycle. Ordinance will be the continuation of the elimination of waste materials that have no place in current society
- Met with positive conversation but don’t want to burden small businesses



- Trying to educate people on other options
- Jeff Cohen notes Councilor Varela submitted it in PHSE subcommittee, one meeting held thus far w/Board of Health, restaurant people, SSCW, worked into Ordinance when it passes will have an effective date 1 year later. Some restaurants are already moving away from these products. Will include black plastic which is not recyclable
- 7% contamination rate is somewhat due to Styrofoam
- Once tech catches up with PLA, a corn-based for plates and flatware, can be mechanically composted though it looks/behaves like plastic
- Will want to strengthen Ordinance but it is a start
- Chris Cantone: Can City get savings from landfills/discounts on waste? He has had conversations w/Amy's Kitchen (?), looking to do Ordinances where they are located where they manufacture foods. An Ordinance like this would reduce cost of maintenance at landfill that could benefit City
- Andy Varela, Ward 7 Councilor: If City adopted its own composting we would save \$800K in cost of solid waste
- There is potential to look into something different than what we're doing now, but will take a lot of buy in from various entities. Will reach out to business mentioned by Chris. Believes every business should adopt a composting program but solid waste is based on tonnage. JRM, WM, Casella, etc. should adopt a different way to collect compostable materials. They are collected separate from solid waste, we can divert them this way, but will need a lot of convincing
- John Hayes: Advocating to Micaela Guglielmi, the cost to residents is an impediment to increased composting. If we could expand w/grants to defray that cost, maybe more people would sign up.
- Andy Varela: discussion at state level re backing up programs for facilities that can compost with a site assignment. Only 5 on the north shore have assignment and capacity to compost at a larger level. State looking at how to incentivize private and municipal entities to have buy in when it comes to composting
- Every municipality should be able to make their own composting facility

Update on DOER Building Energy Code Straw Proposal (John Hayes)

- PowerPoint to be made available to SERC committee
- Should be discussed in March
- Chris: already went through 2 phases of SMART program, now Phase 4 is being discussed re how to continue with renewables. Chris can send slides to John

Update on Peabody Peaker Plant (John Hayes)

- Susan Smoller, Breathe Clean North Shore, presented to SERC over the summer.
- SERC is advisory to Mayor and City Council within its purview, also wants to contribute to decarbonization / mitigation efforts. Peaker Plant is in our neighborhood
- We have submitted a letter of support to BCNS. There is another opportunity to submit a letter to the Governor and state reps. noting that there is an alternative to new fossil fuel structures during peak summer usage



- This was proposed in 2015, 7 years ago, and there was no full environmental review and no consideration of EJ communities. It was a deficient process, and BCNS has been advocating for these things, EJ and MEPA reviews, and health impact analyses
- John Hayes will submit a letter as a resident and professor, since he can't represent SERC due to lack of quorum
- John Hayes to make teach-in BCNS Peaker Plant presentation available
- Battery storage issues
- Rick Nye: should be reviewed as any other facility. ENF (Environmental Notification Form) was done when an EIR (Environmental Impact Review) is what should have been done. Mitigation measures can lead to an approval, but there is no explanation in this case why a health impact assessment was not done. Not sure about mitigation/amount of combustion deemed small enough to not have health impacts?
- Chris Cantone: does not believe municipalities have special rights to avoid required reviews, this is required at the state level
 - People wonder why alternatives were not written up in the alternative reviews
 - Simply asking for a temporary pause for further review. Projects have been paused before

Chris Cantone and John Hayes to connect re Straw Proposal Info/solar

Upcoming City Committee Meetings

Recycling Committee: First Tuesday of the month, 3/1/22, 6:30-7:30PM

Conservation Commission: Third Tuesday of the month, 3/15/22, 6:30PM

Tree Commission: Third Monday of the month, 3/21/22, 6:00PM

Next SERC Meeting - Wednesday, March 23, 2022, at 6:30PM on zoom

Adjournment

No vote possible due to lack of quorum. Meeting ends at 7:40PM.

