

Town of Milton
Climate Action Planning (CAP) Committee
October 19th, 2023

Meeting Date: 10/19/23

Members in Attendance: Jon Godleski; Tracy Dyke-Redmond; Alex Hasha; Ron Israel; Lisa Troy; Mary Stefanidakis (arrived 6:12pm); Arthur Doyle (arrived 6:34pm);

Members Attending Remotely: N/A

Other Attendees: Josh Eckhart-Lee; Jack Turner;

Members Absent: Maggie Oldfield

Meeting Location: Town Hall, Cronin Conference Room, 525 Canton Avenue

Time Meeting called to Order: 6:01 PM

Time Meeting Adjourned: 7:30PM

Welcome, consider any additional agenda items

Co-chair Tracy Dyke-Redmond called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

Review/approve meeting minutes

No corrections were offered to the draft minutes.

Jon Godleski motioned to approve. Lisa Troy seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor.

Next Steps on Emissions Inventory

Josh Eckhart-Lee gave a short update on ongoing work with the Apex consultants. They are working on an emissions reduction pathway analysis that will be a resource to the committee as they prioritize actions for the Climate Action Plan. They are also providing design support to give the committee tools for engaging the public creatively and effectively. Their recommendation is that public outreach materials should strike a fun, casual, and graphic tone. They are preparing a color palette and logo concepts to enable consistent branding. They recommend avoiding stock imagery, and instead engaging local photographers to give the materials a clear sense of place.

Jon Godleski and Ron Israel both commented that effective public outreach will be critical to the success of the climate action plan, given most greenhouse gas emissions in town are from private sources. Ron Israel suggested that strategies for effective public outreach should be an element of the action plan itself. The point was made that public engagement materials should be fun and engaging, but that the final action plan itself could be more serious and detailed.

Alex Hasha mentioned that, in a previous meeting, there was general consensus that more information and data is needed on the emissions impact of natural land development and fugitive emissions from natural gas leaks. Unfortunately, there is insufficient budget remaining in the contract with Apex to ask them to work on this. He further mentioned that draft guidance from the GHG Protocol on emissions from natural land use changes may point the committee to some accessible tools for quantifying the carbon sequestration potential of specific plots of land.

Discussion: How/when the CAP Committee should weigh in on issues in front of other boards/committees

Tracy Dyke-Redmond asked staff members present whether they could provide any examples of how other committees have engaged on matters of common interest in the past.

Josh Eckhart-Lee said that usually, when a committee sends a letter of recommendation or an advisory letter, the flow of information is usually upward to the elected committee that oversees their work. Usually, there is no direct inter-committee dialogue between appointed committees. He gave the example of the lately adopted pedestrian and bike plan. The Master Planning Implementation Committee reviewed it and sent their comments to the Select Board.

Alex Hasha mentioned that prior public comment called out gaps in coordination between town committees, and asked this committee to play a more proactive role. He suggested that we shouldn't anchor too heavily on past practices unless there is a specific reason not to.

Lisa Troy commented that the climate issue is so broad that this committee will have much more overlapping concerns with a broad range of committees in town. Tracy noted that, because of this, there should be a connection to the Climate Action Plan when we are engaging other committees.

Alex Hasha proposed that this committee should attempt to weigh-in when it has value-added research or expertise that will advance the discussion of other committees, or when decisions before another committee directly impact the town's climate goals (to be defined in the climate action plan).

Jon Godleski commented that between the options of personally speaking at meetings and writing letters, that letters seem to carry more weight.

Lisa Troy mentioned that reaching out to stakeholders of the climate action plan is part of the committee's charge, and many committees are stakeholders.

Tracy Dyke-Redmond: The flow of information can be two ways. We're going to need to talk to committees to get their input on the plan, and we can share information with other committees. She also encouraged the committee to consider the timing of engagement, and recommended waiting until the draft climate plans is more fully developed. She then recommended that the discussion be tabled this until the next meeting to give Maggie Oldfield a chance to weigh in, since she originally proposed the topic.

Research templates

Tracy Dyke-Redmond introduced the topic, stating that the goal of this discussion was to review example research documents prepared by Tracy Dyke-Redmond and Alex Hasha and discuss how we can use these documents to drive collaboration within the committee. The goal was also to get the committee members thinking about how they will tackle their own research areas. She also reminded the committee that the work plan calls for us to generate draft content for all topic areas between now and December, and in Q1 2024 we will be gathering feedback on those drafts.

Tracy Dyke-Redmond shared a generic outline document, offering it as a skeleton that committee members can fill in as their research progresses. It does not need to be in a specific order or be complete for sharing and discussion to begin. The goal is not to draft the final language for the climate action plan, but trying to get started and get information and ideas written down so it can be shared and discussed.

Alex Hasha offered a proposed workflow for research collaboration: Each committee member will manage their own research notes and references in the way that works best for them. The committee members can synthesize their work by integrating it into shared, collaboratively editable documents hosted on Sustainable Milton's google workspace. One document owner will have full edit access, while collaborators will have suggest/comment access.

Jack Turner took a follow-up action to determine if the number of members with access to the documents needs to be less than a quorum (5) to comply with the open meeting law. The expectation is that it is acceptable for all members to have access, but that they should avoid responding to comments in the document and instead save any discussion for the public meetings.

The committee reconfirmed the following topic assignments:

Climate change risk mitigation:

- **Flooding:** Alex Hasha and Arthur Doyle

- **Storms and wind:** Tracy Dyke-Redmond
- **Wildfire:** Lisa Troy
- **Heat Waves:** Jon Godleski
- **Drought:** Mary Stefanidakis
- **Conservation:** Maggie Oldfield and Ron Israel

GHG Emissions mitigation:

- **Stationary emissions (Buildings):** Mary Stefanidakis and Alex Hasha
- **Transportation:** Lisa Troy
- **Fugitive Emissions:** Tracy Dyke-Redmond
- **Solid Waste:** Arthur Doyle
- **Conservation:** Maggie Oldfield and Ron Israel

Tracy Dyke-Redmond asked the members researching conservation plans to distinguish their work from that of the conservation committee. Arthur Doyle gave an overview of the conservation committee's typical activities, and encouraged them to connect with the conservation committee early on and get to know the members and their areas of interest and expertise.

Ron Israel commented that in these template plans, it's important for us to prioritize, define clear goals, and explicitly describe the kinds of behaviors that we're hoping to generate as a result of this work. (Document continues on the next page)

Announcements

Committee members shared recent or upcoming meetings or and events of interest.

Alex Hasha summarized a conversation with Ian Cooke, NepRWA, regarding the safety inspection results of the Baker dam in Lower Mills. The dam on the Neponset was inspected in March 2018 and assessed to be in "Poor "condition and pose a "Significant" Hazard. Ian Cooke described an effort over the last decade or more to have the dam either removed or modified to be of less harm to the fish populations in the Neponset. There are some flood risks associated with malfunctioning or failure of the dam, but they would largely be upstream along the bike path and there is limited property in that area. The superfund EPA cleanup has delayed plans to upgrade the dam.

Tracy Dyke-Redmond described her efforts to engage high school students and teachers, including the AP Government, AP Environmental Science, and AP Statistics classes at MHS. Arthur Doyle mentioned that there may be community service opportunities to be created for high school students, who have a community service graduation requirement. Additionally, he suggested thinking about how the committee

might engage college students in environmental science and climate majors at Curry college and UMass Boston.

Lisa Troy related that she recently spoke before the School Committee to offer them a summary of the climate committee's work to-date, and share some of the research questions she had formulated relative to schools. Her next step is to meet with individuals who have expertise in the relevant data.

Reminder of where we are in the work plan and agenda topics for next time

In the next meeting in November, committee members should share drafts of the research reports on their topic, whatever state it's in, so the committee can start to talk about what we're learning, where there's gaps, and where help is needed. Committee members were asked to share those the Friday prior to the next meeting, by the 10th of November.

Tracy Dyke-Redmond reminded the committee that it is due to report back progress to the Select Board in December, so will need to discuss that report at our next meeting.

High level work over the next 9 months will include:

- January-February: Plan public meetings and surveys
- March: Hold public meetings.
 - Potentially issuing special invitations to neighborhood associations
 - Booking rooms at Council on Aging or Library well in advance.
 - Potentially holding a special event for students.
- June: Report progress to select board again.

Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

Lisa Troy moved to adjourn. Tracy Dyke-Redmond seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor.

Documents Reviewed

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