

Princeton Environmental Action Committee (EAC) Meeting Minutes August 1, 2018

Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm

Committee members present:

Claire Golding (CG), Phoebe Moore (PM), Chris Samoiloff (CS), Phil Gott (PG)

Absent: Corey Burnham-Howard (CBH)

Review & Approve Minutes

May 21, 2018 minutes approved 3-0 with some minor edits (PG abstained, as he was not present for 5/21 meeting)

Public Comment

Resident David Pratt of Gregory Road voiced concerns about PMLD lobbying against the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) expansion and advocating not being included in the Clean Energy Standard (CES). Mr. Pratt noted that it's been difficult to bring these topics up with PMLD manager Brian Allen.

Mr. Pratt presented some facts on clean energy, and ways that it could potentially work for our municipal light department.

Committee members responded that EAC should consider attending future light department meetings to learn more about its position related to green energy.

PMLD Meeting Report

CG, PM, PG, and CBH attended the June 13, 2018 PMLD meeting and presented ways the EAC's mission overlapped with that of PMLD, including providing information to town residents on heat pumps, electric vehicles, electric heating and cooling for new buildings, improving efficiency of existing buildings, educating residents about available grants and rebates, and peak shaving. This was presented in the spirit of collaboration and politely received, with no specific interest expressed at that time in any proposed collaboration. During the meeting, Brian Allen stated that 50 households minimum were needed to make offering green power (for an extra charge) viable for PMLD. A potential action item for the EAC is to determine the level of interest in town in buying green energy.

It was suggested that an EAC member attend future meetings as a follow up on these ideas and to best ascertain ways the EAC might work with PMLD. PG volunteered to attend, with others of us as backup when he was unable to make a meeting. **Action item:** Next meeting we will sign up to cover attendance at PMLD meetings.

Meeting Schedule for the rest of the year

We voted to continue to meet twice per month, the 1st Wednesday and the 3rd Monday, at 7 pm for the rest of the year. The vote was unanimous.

Round Robin of exciting research discoveries

This agenda item was passed over in the interest of time.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Discussion

MVP could be a source of grants and doesn't require matching funds from the Town. It does require some volunteer time and requires the Fire Department (FD), Police Department (PD), Department of Public Works (DPW), etc. to identify areas of vulnerability.

Note: EAC to speak to the FD, PD, DPW to discuss the MVP program. Pending willingness to support it, we will include MVP in the Environmental Action Plan (EAP). (Unanimous)

Action item: PG to approach Nina for advice about the likely willingness of the FD, PD, DPW, and Conservation Commission to attend a brainstorming session (about 8 hours) should the town decide to proceed with the development of an MVP plan.

HeatSmart program application

This program provides financial support for people putting in high efficiency heat pumps, etc. The deadline for applications is September 16th.

Action item: PM to forward the email about this program to EAC committee members. She will learn what is required to move forward with this application and bring that information back to the committee.

Town News/Town Buzz info distribution

EAC members would like to begin sharing some of our research results with residents of the Town. Some ideas:

- Including announcements in Town News.
- Offering an “Ask the EAC” time during Town Buzz meetings.

We also discussed that these forms of communication still don't reach all town residents. We wondered about the feasibility of a town-funded newsletter to reach every home with all the town news (with the potential of providing a vehicle for future surveys). It could just be a paper copy of the Town News mailed to every resident.

Action item: CS to reach out to Lynne Grettum, the Town Clerk, about putting EAC info into Town News and the possibility of a town newsletter.

Calamint Hill Road paving (NEW)

The EAC was contacted regarding issues with Calamint Hill Road paving, specifically the removal of shade trees in a narrow section of the road in the process of widening it, and the timing of the road work during the migration period of the threatened marbled salamander (one section of the road is designated a priority habitat). The EAC discussed how we are to respond to issues such as this. It was

felt that such inquiries should be brought to the next possible meeting as public comments either in person, or as correspondence, letting the correspondent know it will be discussed during the public comment period, should they wish to attend.

Regarding this specific issue, PG brought up the idea of putting information about scenic bylaws into the land use section of the EAP. **Action item:** PG will look into the Northborough scenic bylaw to use as an example.

Discuss writing schedules

CG proposed, after reviewing some sections, that the information proposed for the EAP (Environmental Action Plan) be consolidated into a much shorter document, and much of the background research be moved into the appendix. The point was also made that we could research forever, but that we need to stop at some point, with the understanding that this work will continue beyond the EAP. The committee voted to write a more concise plan with appendix material as needed. The vote was unanimous.

Action item: CG to write up an example section for review at next meeting.

Work in groups

This agenda item was passed over in the interest of time.

Action Items

- CG to create a signup sheet for the Light Department meetings to be brought to the next meeting.
- PG to approach Nina about setting up a brainstorming session with the FD, PD, DPW, and Conservation Commission about MVP program.
- PM to follow up on the HeatSmart program application and forward info on this program to the committee.
- CS to reach out to Town Clerk Lynne Grettum about putting EAC info into the Town News and the possibility of a town newsletter.
- PG to look into the Northborough scenic bylaw.
- CG to write up an example EAP section for review at next meeting.

Agenda items for next meeting

- Public comment period
- Review and approve minutes of August 1, 2018 meeting
- Scenic bylaw report/discussion
- Report back on HeatSmart
- Report back on Town News
- Review example EAP section
- Agenda items for next meeting

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Samoiloff