

Princeton Environmental Action Committee (EAC) Meeting Minutes August 20, 2018

Meeting called to order at 7:07pm

Committee members present:

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

Absent: Corey Burnham-Howard (CBH), Phoebe Moore (PM)

Review & Approve Minutes

August 1, 2018 minutes approved 3-0 with some minor edits

Public Comment

No public comment

New Business: Three-minute rule

Vote: The committee approved 3-0 a motion to adopt the same 3-minute rule for public comment that the Select Board has adopted. It will only be used when necessary to ensure all agenda items are discussed.

PMLD 8/8 meeting report (PG)

The PMLD adopted a formal policy that no individual members of the light commission or PMLD employees may make public statements about PMLD policy without approval of the light commission. A reminder that we as members of the EAC are held to a similar policy for all town employees, whether paid or volunteer.

The PMLD is holding a Senior lunch on September 25th and is looking for topics. They asked the EAC if there is anything we would like to present. Claire and Phil to discuss with Brian Allen in upcoming Aug 24 meeting.

PMLD is looking to the EAC to find 50 households in Princeton that will commit to renewable energy. How this may be accomplished is the focus of a special 8/24 meeting between Brian Allen, CG and PG (see next agenda item). EAC would like to have an estimate of price per kilowatt hour before querying residents. Failing getting this from PMLD, we could ask residents if they would commit to renewables based on any reasonable price. The possibility of surveying residents via additions to the light bill was discussed. *Note: when the Town was considering a town-owned internet system, there was a website with an online application people could fill out to gauge resident commitment.*

Massachusetts Climate Action Network (MCAN) is surveying municipal light departments in the state and Brian Allen (BA) suggested the light commission and EAC coordinate to share reports and answers. Will be discussed at the 8/24 meeting.

Jim Whitman shared research on how many people in Massachusetts are using solar. He was comparing Princeton to other municipal light departments.

PMLD meeting 8/24

This meeting will be between BA, PG, and CG. They will discuss how to move forward with getting a 50-customer (minimum) expression of interest in renewable energy and coordinating with PMLD on filling out the MCAN survey (see previous agenda item).

HeatSmart program application

HeatSmart Mass is a community-based outreach and education program that will encourage the adoption of clean heating and cooling technologies including air-source heat pumps, ground-source heat pumps, modern wood heating, and solar hot water, through a group purchasing model to drive down installation costs. Six applications from communities (groups of up to 3 contiguous communities can apply) will be granted.

The EAC recommended the following:

1. **Action item:** PM should contact Oriana Reilly from MCAN and/or Kelly Brown from Green Communities to see if they are aware of other contiguous towns to Princeton who are considering applying. We will need them to take the lead, based on the work the EAC is currently tasked with and the immediacy of the application deadline.
2. Failing joining into an already-in-process application from a neighboring town, we should recommend that the Town pursue this program should it become available again in the future.
3. EAC can provide education on this program to the community.
4. EAC should work to get installers of these systems involved with real estate agents and builders.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP)

Nina's response about setting up a brainstorming session with the FD, PD, DPW, and Conservation Commission on the MVP program was that the current focus of the Town and these departments is the Public Safety Building but they would like to consider this in the future. Meanwhile, there is still some MVP-type work being done in town, such as the recent grant for culvert replacement on Ball Hill Road. In the EAP, we will recommend the town consider seeking a grant from the MVP program.

Communication with townspeople (CS)

The Town News email is sent out when there is something to communicate rather than on a regular basis. The EAC can send the Town Clerk (Lynne Grettum) items to include in the Town News, either as an add-on item when the next one goes out, or in a special Town News if it is something time-sensitive.

As far as distribution of a monthly paper-copy form of Town News, there have been many efforts made by the Town to distribute information to all residents in a variety of ways (e.g. with the census) with disappointing results.

The Select Board has been talking about a communication plan to dispense Public Safety Building information to the Town. There is definitely a need for some kind of mechanism to distribute information to ALL town residents, including those not online.

Need for information distribution is a problem for more than just Princeton; it is something MCAN has identified as an issue in getting out information on topics such as net zero emissions.

Action item: CS to contact Karen Cruise about EAC attending the Town Buzz to present information and about the EAC's need for town-wide communication, to hopefully expand the Select Board's conversation on this topic.

Sample Edited Section

We liked the format Claire has proposed and created for a first section. PG reminded us of his suggestion that CBH review laws included in the EAP and Phoebe look at language used, in respect to how people perceive things.

Action item: PG to attempt to put his section into the proposed format.

Action item: CG to work on the next section to review at our next meeting.

Book Recommendation Idea (PG)

On a visit to Woods Hole PG encountered a number of books on how to be green. The committee discussed creating a recommended reading list along with recommended websites. CG suggested we check with the library to see what books they have on this topic and if they could create a "green" books display.

Action item: PG will reach out to the library to determine what books it has already, if they will collect our book recommendations, and if a special display area could be devoted to featuring those books.

New Business:

PG proposed we add a "new business" section to the agenda for any items that come up for discussion during the meeting or after the agenda has been submitted.

There was a short discussion about whether there were any groups the EAC could partner with for support in our endeavors. Kelly Brown has told us the Regional Environmental Council is helpful for Green Community Status efforts.

Action Item: CS to speak with the Conservation Commission on watershed issues and to see if there is information from them that we can plug into the EAP.

Action Items

- PM to contact Oriana Reilly from MCAN and/or Kelly Brown from Green Communities to see if they are aware of other contiguous towns to Princeton who are considering applying for this year's HeatSmart program.
- CS to contact Karen Cruise about EAC attending the Town Buzz to present information and about the EAC's need for town-wide communication, to hopefully expand the Select Board's conversation on this topic.
- PG to put his section into the proposed format.
- CG to work on the next section to review at our next meeting
- PG to reach out to the library and will collect our book recommendations.
- CS to speak with the Conservation Commission on watershed issues and to see if there is information from them that we can plug into the EAP.

Agenda items for next meeting

- Public comment period
- Review and approve minutes of August 20, 2018 meeting
- 8/24 PMLD meeting report
- HeatSmart outreach report
- library outreach report
- communication methods report
- Conservation commission report
- Review next EAP section
- New business
- Agenda items for next meeting

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Samoiloff