

Infrastructure & Energy Committee Minutes, November 8, 2021

Infrastructure & Energy Committee Members present: (On Zoom)

Peter Doyle, Chair, John Solomon, Vice Chair, Dr. Paul Canniff, Jane Ward, Rob Wilson

Infrastructure & Energy Committee Members absent:

Clay Schofield

Others in Attendance: (On Zoom)

Councilor Gordon Starr Town Council Liaison, Cynthia Cole, Citizen, Alex Bowe, Citizen, Cindy Dabkowski, Administrative Assistant.

Call to Order:

Peter Doyle called the November 8, 2021 meeting of the Infrastructure & Energy Committee (IEC) to order at 5:04 PM. The meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee was held remotely to avoid group congregation.

Approval of Minutes:

October 4, 2021 and October 25, 2021 approval of minutes postponed.

New Business

None

Old Business

Jane Ward tells the committee that the owner of the auction company called and said if you still want the food compost dehydrator, come and get it. The Challenger club in Osterville is mailing a check they have another location that can use it. The beauty of these units is that they take off the water weight. Thinking of what we're moving out of the town transfer station and if some percentage 20 or 30% of our trash is food waste. If you can dehydrate it you save the cost of transferring the heavier material.

Jane Ward gives an overview of the Somerville Native Plant bylaw. Somerville Town Council unanimously passed native plant ordinance that establishes minimum requirements for native plants and trees to be planted in city on parks, open spaces and streets. It applies to new plantings carried out by the City on behalf of the city. And it grew out of discussions between the administration, the city council and community advocates. It doesn't require that 100% of new plantings be native, but there are different percentages depending on where the planting is occurring. A forestry consultant and discussed how important it is, even though it's a pretty densely populated urban development. It's still important to have native plants that are lower maintenance, require less water, better likely to support the native pollinators. They're still allowing some of the other types of plantings that have traditionally been used. Cynthia Cole spoke with Elizabeth Wurfbain of the Main Street Business District and they are going to create pollinator pass down Main Street. They are working with a consultant on selecting the plants and they're working with the Department of Public Works to use the planters and they're going to use spaces whether already existing plantings, so I thought that was right.

There is a garden in Osterville on Main Street by the Barnstable Clean Water Coalition. That's a native plant demo garden. Very attractive, and it does have some blooming plants that would be pollinators, but a variety of easy care native grasses and pink berry and sweet pepper and things like that.

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Peter Doyle asks members to read the bylaw by the next meeting, members could discuss next steps.

David Anthony gave a professional presentation on the Green Communities and the five criteria the solar installation bylaws that you need to comply with the Green Communities Act, the energy inventory effort that the Town has done, and they talked about energy efficient vehicles.

It appears that the Town Council is not favorable to the stretch code. There's substantial resistance to it. It looks like the Town would go forward with the energy inventory proposal.

A Green Community status would bring in money to the town that the other towns designated green communities are getting and have been getting. And it will also make buildings more efficient.

A vehicle policy and an energy reduction plan are both done but not approved by the town council. David Anthony is going to take these two proposals to the school committee and the airport commission.

Gordon Starr states that the building code environment changes constantly. Within about a year they are going to develop a net zero stretch code that a community can adopt if wanted, but the basic code is so much closer to the stretch code that there isn't that much of a difference.

Peter Doyle asks for members to compile a list of “What can I do on a personal level to combat climate change” John Solomon states solar panels on house and or property. Cynthia Cole will email Peter Doyle her list of ideas.

Adjourn

Peter Doyle asks for a motion to adjourn meeting. **Motion** moved Paul Canniff to adjourn the meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee at 6:38 PM, 2nd by John Solomon; five members in attendance voted affirmatively.

Next Meeting: November 22, 2021 5:00PM | Remote Zoom Meeting

Upcoming Meeting: December 13, 2021, December 27, 2021

Documents and Exhibits

Handout 1: Agenda, November 8, 2021

Handout 2: Draft Infrastructure and Energy Committee Minutes October 4, 2021

Handout 3: Draft Infrastructure and Energy Committee Minutes October 25, 2021

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Dabkowski