

Meeting Minutes

Weston Sustainable Committee

(SusCom)

February 8, 2022

Sustainable Committee Members	Present	Sustainable Committee Members	Present
David Ayer (DA) Member at Large	Y	Alyson Muzila (AM) School Com. Rep	Y
Phoebe Beierle (PB) Permanent Bldg. Com Rep	Y	Sandy Kendall (SK) Member at Large	Y
Alex Selvig (AS) Planning Board Rep	N	Katharina Wilkins (AKW) Chair, Select Board Liaison	Y
Chris Jylkka (CJ) Member at Large	Y		

Others Present: Kortni Wroten (KW), – Weston Sustainability Coordinator; Debbie Slotpole – Resident, SWAG, Lori Hess—Resident, Alicia Primer—Resident, Imai Kalani—Town Planner, Andrea Becerra— Sus Director, Acton, Barbara Fullerton, Brandon Roberson

No.	Description	Action
1.	A meeting of the Weston Sustainability Committee was held utilizing Zoom video, as duly posted, and called to order at 7:09 PM.	-
2.	AKW read the open meeting directive from Gov. Baker at 7:12	AKW
3.	January meeting minutes were edited collectively and approved unanimously. PB moved, AKW seconded.	-
4.	Permanent Building Committee: PB Middle School and High School Master Plan has been on Gary's plate for a while (3 mos). It deals w/ Educational/Building infrastructure. There will be a sub-committee working on it w/someone from School Committee and hopefully someone from Sus Committee.	PB
5.	School Committee: Its in middle of budget season w/2 budget hearings. 3 Updates: First is: buildings and grounds. AM wishes to have a Sus Committee member involved to look at utility expenditures and LT efficiency improvements as possible action items for next year. AKW notes it can be difficult but there are savings opportunities within the HVAC in buildings. Second is policy: Can budget decisions be made through Sus lens? Third is PTO folk have been working well with HS/MS Principals to get a waste audit (waste hauling contracts up for renewal) and to get students more involved w/composting. DA and PB have discussion on hauling contracts at the Weston transfer station (DA thinks end of 23/24). AM notes bottle fillers but also bottled water in vending machines at HS.	AM
6.	Andrea Beccerra, Sus Director, Acton, MA: ~7:30: (By-laws on fossil fuel infrastructure discussion) Andrea said Acton's by-law was introduced by a Select Board member. Idea was originally floated by a coalition with help from FAQs, flyers (one pager at town meetings) webinar and website. It includes new construction and major rehabs (>75% original gross floor area). Did not include exception was gas stoves (she was surprised) but included financial hardship and water heaters. Her role was a liaison between coalition and town. Acton borrowed language from Concord, Lexington and Brookline. It was found that education for town is key. Process took ~5 months. They did two things: A by-law and a home rule petition (that is what calls for state legislature to implement by-law). AM asked who was against it. Andrea said not many were against it when they realized it was only new construction. The only opposition was initial misunderstanding. Andrea mentioned a company called Abode as a good technical resource as is Rocky MT Institute. New town buildings would be included. PB asked about time commitment w/committees and staff time. Andrea said her time involvement was fairly limited but increased once by-law passed. Subsequent hearings took some time. AKW suggests the town should do this sooner than later. Lori Hess asked what kind of volume annually? KW said Concord see ~20-22/year of new construction which could be on par w/Weston. AKW suggests Acton could be larger than Weston. SK asks if there was any grumbling 'after the fact'. Andrea said no, but the by-law had not been implemented yet. Andrea said they got positive feedback	

	<p>from Acton developers. Lori asked about the avg sq footage in Acton, but Andrea was not sure. Lori said there may be pushback in Weston because of the size of the houses. AKW googled briefly and found that indeed, Weston has larger homes on average. DA asks about pool heaters and Andrea said that did not come up.</p>	
7.	<p>Continued Discussion re: By-Laws on Fossil Fuel Infrastructure: ~ 8:12: DA suggests we go to Select Board to begin conversation early in the process. AKW does not want to approach the Select Board in budget season.</p> <p>AKW asked group if the Sus Committee wants to work on this general topic in earnest. The answer was a unanimous 'yes'. AKW suggests maybe we form a seed group for a coalition. PB added that such a group should state goals clearly and create talking points for future communication. Important might be a focus on new construction, and communication around future retrofits. CJ notes that Acton, Lexington and Concord all do res and commercial. AKW asks if it should include town buildings. PB bring up the electrification of schools which would be very impactful but probably difficult. AM has concerns. She feels like a vote may be premature and that we need to form a key group before. She thinks the risk is that we have one good chance, and we need to make good on it.</p> <p>AKW says that the state has its own goals on its Carbon Roadmap, much of which would align with a fossil-fuel free by-law. Debbie Slotpole added that DOER is currently inviting feedback on draft language for an opt-in net-zero code, and the committee should consider submitting such feedback.</p> <p>AKW also mentioned the money spent on the gas leak study (hidden costs). Alicia Primer thinks Sus Com could have the time to get this done by fall town meeting, and that Weston's buildings are especially impactful because they are often so large. DA says that town buildings should definitely be included in the scope of the by-law.</p>	AKW
8.	<p>Update from Sustainability Coordinator (KW): ~8:43: There was a Green Communities grant on LED retrofits that Weston was not awarded as LED improvements are not competitive enough anymore (emissions reductions per dollar DOER money spent not high enough). KW is looking at applying for an educational program teaching behavioral strategies to reduce energy usage in town buildings as well as electric vehicle charging stations. KW is still collecting ideas from departments for the grant, which is due mid-April.</p> <p>She will also apply to an MVP sustainable landscaping education program. Finally, she said that there was some Department of Environmental Protection grants that will open up in the near future to help address waste in the schools.</p>	KW
9.	<p>Upcoming Meeting Discussion: ~8:52: Next Meeting March 8th at 7:00 via zoom</p>	AKW

Respectfully submitted: Chris Jylkka