

MONTAGUE ENERGY & SOLAR PLANNING COMMITTEES JOINT MEETING
Minutes Wednesday October 25, 2023, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM

Designate facilitator and scribe 4:35 PM: Sally Pick Facilitator, Tim Van Egmond Scribe

Attending: Tim Van Egmond, Sally Pick, Ariel Elan, Pam Hanold, Jeff Singleton guest (for Montague Reporter).

Approve minutes from Aug. 22, September 26, Oct. 10 MEC meeting (vote). Tabled.

Update on potential energy savings at the Clean Water Facility: Jeff Singleton said Supt. Chelsea Little presented the idea to the Select Board, got approval to proceed with META grant.

Community Planning for Solar with U. Mass. Clean Energy Ext.: brief discussion on draft summary Sally wrote after our Oct. 10 meeting specifically on this topic. Tim said it was good, Pam like the clarity, recommended bullets. Sally suggested we set deadline for members to review more fully and revisit. Sally reported on her meeting with the Planning Committee last night about solar planning.

More discussion about technical state report that there's enough capacity on disturbed land, parking lots, large roofs, etc. to more than meet state goals for solar. Issue of state regulation of solar development, trying to figure out how to address sticky question of damage to forests, farm lands, ecosystems. Regulation, legal cases, model zoning? How to broach this to committees?

Ariel pointed out that once input and engagement has begun with committees and departments, anything we bring to Select Board is finely tuned and specific.

Sally asked people get back to her with feedback on her summary by Friday Nov. 10. How best to use it as a starting place to motivate boards and committees to begin solar planning?

Helping Town Prioritize Energy-Saving Projects for Upcoming State & Federal Grants.

Discuss where process is for exploring PV for Town Hall Annex, DPW and Safety Complex: Town Hall Annex has been awarded to a company to install PV.

Update on Green Communities Grant Projects. Tabled, except for LED streetlights.

Energy Related Facility Updates: Grant awarded for converting Montague Center streetlights to LED. No news on Elementary School ventilation. Net zero and energy efficient techniques including embodied carbon was tabled. Sally will work on it when she has time.

State & federal level energy-related policies & legislation updates: For Green Communities to qualify for Green Communities 2.0, "Climate Leaders," they need to adopt the opt-in specialized stretch code and meet other requirements. Would open opportunity for more grants. In draft form now. There will be a hearing coming up soon in the Legislature on the Green Bank.

Recruiting more Energy Committee members. Pam asked if it's possible to ask Walter, Maureen from Planning Committee, etc. for recommendations.

Adding Missing approved minutes to the Town web site: Tabled

Plan agenda for next meeting. Sally will do next agenda.

Motion to adjourn, seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.