

Meeting Minutes Green Energy Committee

8am on Thursday, March 11, 2021

**Virtual Meeting Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020
Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law**

Member Attendees: Ed Kern, Sue Klem, Ed Lang, Ann Risso, Paul Shorb (Chair), C.J. Volpone

Members absent: Jim Hutchinson, Jonathan Soo

Guest/Liaison Attendees: Jennifer Glass (BOS), Alex Chatfield, Gary Taylor, Belinda Gingrich, Roy Harvey, Audrey Kalmus, Trish O'Hagan, Lynne Smith

1. Minutes from 2/11/21 meeting of the GEC

No action (were not yet drafted for review).

2. GEC annual report for 2020

Paul described the draft he had emailed for review the night before to all GEC members, along with a copy of the report for 2019.

- Paul asked all GEC members to review it and provide any suggested changes to him by Sunday afternoon.
- He will submit a final version by the noon deadline on Monday, March 15.

3. Comment on State's [Draft Interim Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2030](#).

Paul encouraged GEC members to review this sign-on [letter](#), which the Sierra Club has prepared and circulated, commenting on the above draft plan (the "CECP") released by the Baker Administration for public comment by March 22. (The CECP is an attempt to comply with obligations placed on the Administration by the Global Warming Solutions Act, enacted in 2008, which requires the Administration to define targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions each decade until 2050.) The Sierra Club sign-on letter is designed to be signed by public officials -- but in their individual capacity rather than as an official act of their town. This style apparently was chosen to allow signing without a vote of a Board of Selects (for example), and thus make it easier for individuals to [sign electronically](#) by Sierra Club's deadline of March 21.

Paul encouraged GEC members to consider signing on, and to get more background to inform their sign-on decision by attending a one-hour [Webinar](#) on March 16 at 6pm. (This schedule will not conflict with the virtual meeting starting at 7:30 that night regarding the Housing

Choice Act, discussed below.) Paul plans to attend the Sierra Club webinar and email comments to GEC members, in case that would help them decide whether to sign on.

4. Lincoln Green Energy Choice program rollout

The group discussed what the GEC should do to try to get as many people in town as possible to choose the 100% Green option. The discussion built on ideas and recommendations developed by the CCA Subcommittee at its meeting March 9. We seemed to have a consensus that such a campaign should begin as soon as possible, while the official announcement in January of the Lincoln Green Energy Choice program was still recent news, and should have its main effort in the time period through Town Meeting in May. See below for more details.

We agreed to establish and publicize a “stretch goal” to try to help motivate people to choose 100% Green. Paul Gromer of Peregrine has reported that the highest level he knows any town has achieved to date is 7%, achieved by Newton after an extensive campaign and when the cost differential was substantially less. We nevertheless chose the ambitious goal of 25% of Town meters signed up for 100% Green or equivalent program (meaning, based on Class 1 RECs) by the time of Town Meeting. Under this equivalency idea, we could include those signed up with the GECA 100% renewables program as counting towards that goal.

We agreed to publish interim reports of the Town’s progress towards that goal. Ed Kern said Peregrine has not provided him any progress reports since 2/19, when 4.5% had opted up. However, he has confirmed with Peregrine that they can resume providing weekly updates, and he will ask them to do so at least through the date of Town Meeting in May. We identified the following ways that such progress reports could be published: (1) periodic (weekly?) notices in Lincoln talk; (2) a poster or similar graphic placed somewhere in the Lincoln Mall; and (3) a thermometer-style sign or similar placed at the Transfer Station (similar to the existing sign marking recycling totals). We had the following volunteers to help with this effort:

- Ed Kern to take the lead on converting weekly data from Peregrine into a bar chart or similar graphic that would show our progress.
- Ed Kern to (a) calculate the carbon-reducing impact of the median Lincoln household choosing 100% Green in terms (e.g., pounds of CO₂e per month) and (b) translate that into one or more comparisons that may be motivating to people (e.g., how does that compare to switching to an EV, or driving fewer miles per month in a gasoline-powered car?) Ed asked all GEC members to suggest comparisons that would be worth calculating.
- Paul to seek permission from RLF to post something at the Lincoln Mall.
- Alex to take the lead on creating poster or similar for the Mall and sign for the Transfer Station. (Paul to help.)
- Sue to ask Dan Pereira to add to the Town website first page a link to the Lincoln Green Energy Choice website.

The above ideas were not intended to be exclusive and could be supplemented by additional means of communication.

People who had participated in the March 9 meeting of the CCA Subcommittee recommended also supporting this “opt-up” campaign with (A) lawns signs marking households that had opted up (B) sandwich board signs promoting opting up (C) tabling at appropriate locations to promote opting up, with informational cards to hand out and message-laden T-shirts for the volunteers to wear, and maybe a banner to hang from or near the table; (D) phoning people to encourage and/or help them to opt up. Alex and Trish had already shown the CCA Subcommittee drafts they had prepared of such lawns signs, hand-outs, and T-shirts, and obtained preliminary pricing information. Their sense was that \$1,000 would be ample to pay for the supplies they envisioned.

Paul reported that the GEC has an authorized budget of \$5,000 for the fiscal year ending June 31, 2021, and a budget of \$2,500 for the following fiscal year. None of those budgets has yet been spent or committed. (Ed Kern noted that James Booth has volunteered to update for free the study of Town-wide GHG emissions we paid him to do in 2019.) Sue reported that the GEC still has about \$7,000 unspent from an National Grid grant, which has no restrictions on how the GEC can spend that money. Paul MOVED that the GEC authorize spending up to \$2,000 for materials to support the campaign described above, and delegate to the CCA Subcommittee authority to authorize particular expenditures consistent with the above (including design of materials). The motion was APPROVED unanimously by the GEC members then still in the meeting: Ed Kern, Sue Klem, Ed Lang, Ann Risso, Paul Shorb.

We had the following volunteers to help with this effort:

- Paul to contact Dan Pereira to find out process for individual volunteers to procure materials (e.g., lawn signs, hand-outs) and get reimbursed.
- Alex & Trish continue leading design of lawn-signs, T-shirts, sandwich board posters and hand-outs and get pricing.
- See also the bullets above re poster/signage for Mall and Transfer Station.

Several attending expressed the view that live interaction with people, such as through tabling or phone conversations, probably would be necessary to achieve substantial increases in “opting up”, and to approach the 25% stretch goal. One possibility mentioned for tabling would be to bring a laptop with a wireless connection so that one could help someone opt up on the spot, online. However, to do that the customer would need to have with him either a copy of their Eversource bill or the ability to find it online (e.g., know the password they use to access their Eversource account online). So we could try publishing the offer to provide such help at a tabling location, hoping some people could come prepared. For those who don’t come prepared, the tablers could not only hand out an information card but also ask if the customer would like to get a live phone call to help them sign up.

No objections were voiced to the idea of calling people unsolicited to ask if they would sign up. Several attendees said they would be willing to make such calls, several would not. We had the following volunteers to help with this effort:

- Paul, Trish, and Sue said they would make such calls. Sue reported First Parish would like to help with calling, too.

- Paul to draft talking points that could be used by other volunteers to make such calls, and a way to record who opts up.
- Trish to get lawn signs to people who opt up and are willing to host a lawn sign.

5. Housing Choice Act and its implications for development near the Lincoln MBTA station

Jennifer encouraged GEC members to attend the presentation by the Lincoln Planning Board and SLPAC, scheduled for March 16 at 7:30 pm (Zoom link [here](#)), to explain and discuss The Housing Choice Act. Preliminary guidance from Lincoln Planning Board is [here](#). Gary Taylor explained the Act promotes multi-family housing development within a half mile of train stations like Lincoln's, with 15 units/acre as minimum density. That contrasts with the zoning change that the Town has been considering that would allow only up to 6 units/acre as of right, going up to a maximum of 15 units/acre based on additional concessions by the developer. When we do implement such upzoning, Gary hopes we could use that to get the MBTA to improve our rail station (including by making it ADA compliant).

Many important issues about how the Act will be mandated remain unclear, which presumably will be resolved to some extent through rulemaking by the state. Lincoln and its residents would have the right as usual to comment on any proposed rules. However, Jennifer suggested that the GEC get up to speed on these issues as soon as possible, to understand and perhaps have an impact on what's coming, in part by attending the meeting March 16.

- Ed Lang agreed to be our point person to attend on March 16 and to keep the GEC informed going forward. Paul also plans to attend March 16.

6. Identify ongoing and potential projects for GEC to pursue

- Sue described the status of a [grant application](#) to the MAPC Technical Assistance Program that she is helping develop for the Town, which would support planning efforts such as how to get to net zero. She has spoken with Tim Higgins and Paula Vaughn, who are supportive.
- Ed Lang suggested that we do annual reports on our progress on electricity use and our progress on our various initiatives and include that in our annual report to the town.
- Paul reported that March 11 at 12:50 pm he will speak with an 8th grade "Climate Change Civics Group" seeking info about GEC efforts.
Sue asked, does Lincoln/the GEC need to do something to keep us qualified as a Green Community? Are there funds/grants we should be seeking? Roy and Ed Lang volunteered to look into that question
- Paul noted the "Carbon Countdown 2021" event being hosted (via Zoom) Saturday March 13, 9:30 to 11:30, by Sustainable Middlesex and encouraged interested GEC members to attend. (Sue submitted a questionnaire already, describing Lincoln.) Details [here](#). Breakout topics that seem relevant to the GEC include sessions on building electrification, geo microdistricts, Net Zero Municipal Planning, and the HeatSmart Program.

7. Other Business

- a. The BOS at its meeting March 22 is expected to vote on Roy Harvey's appointment to the GEC.

Remote Participation Protocols: Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the www.lincolntown.org. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen or watch the meeting may do so in the following manner:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94235388880?pwd=bkFNN0hY2NMRllldnIWdHNzMVFIQT09>

Meeting ID: 942 3538 8880
876- 9923

Password: 460113

Dial by your location: 646-

No in-person attendance by members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. Minutes of the meeting will be posted on the Town's website as soon as possible after the meeting.