



Harvard Climate Initiative Committee
Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2022

The meeting convened at 7:37 pm on Zoom.

Members: Present: Jefferson Burson, Ellen Sachs Leicher, Deborah O'Rourke, Jaye Waldron, Lucy Wallace, Brian Smith

1 – Approval of Minutes – 8/25/2022

There were no comments on the minutes, Lucy Wallace made a motion to accept the minutes. Jaye Waldron seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

2 – Plan Development

Updates:

A public meeting was held 9/8. Approximately 33 people were in attendance via Zoom. Some edits were made based on comments received and the updated version was presented to the Select Board on 9/20. Some HCIC members thought the Board would have more questions about the Plan, but not many were asked at the meeting.

Lucy Wallace noted that when HCIC asked about funding to implement the Plan, there was no response from the Board. Brian Smith stated that though not much of a response was received from the Board, they at least appeared to be neutral about it. Lucy was disappointed with the less than enthusiastic response and thought the Board should at least have asked, "How can we help you on this?"

Next Steps:

Ellen Sachs Leicher met with a teacher and student who is willing to work on the report to put it in a better format for presentation to the public. After a 30-day comment period, HCIC will bring the report back to the Select Board.

3 – Outreach

Fall Festival Outcome and Bromfield Native Plant Event:

Deborah O'Rourke reported that it went well and quite a few people stopped by and added their names to the mailing list. Items presented included information on heat pumps, EVs, and HarvardEnergize. Members of the Green Team were in attendance and talked about the Bromfield plantings, which will have a dedication on September 30. Plantings around Cronin are also planned.

Writers needed:

Lucy asked whether events will be put in the Harvard Press calendar, to which Ellen responded she had sent some information today. Deborah expressed that HCIC needs to do some more long-term planning for writing articles for the newsletter.

Ellen stated that a questionnaire on who in town has heat pumps, solar, and/or EVs will go out with tax bills this fall to try to get more data, the Town Administrator and Town Council gave their approval to include the questionnaire. Ellen mentioned having energy “coaches” to answer questions residents may have about installing alternative energy systems.

4- CPC Review

How to implement:

Ellen discussed using the Environmental Assessment Form when applicants proposed projects for CPC funding. She will check with Beth Williams the Chair of CPC on a procedure for use of the form. Applications are due in mid-October with decisions made in January. HCIC needs to update and finalize the form. Three projects have already been tentatively put forth.

Discussion ensued on the use of the form. HCIC could invite applicants for CPC funding to come and discuss the form with them about potential environmental or climate-related impacts of their proposal. This assistance would be the start of a process for all Boards, Committees, and Commissions to eventually use the form themselves. Jefferson noted that HCIC does not have a bylaw or guidance as to what it can recommend and suggested establishing criteria or having an outlined approach by which HCIC can make determinations or recommendations.

Ellen suggested a few HCIC members review the form and discuss possible approaches for making recommendations. Jaye and Ellen volunteered to review the form. Lucy will be able to commit to help later in October.

5 – Other Business

Recruitment of Associate member:

No progress.

Harvard Social Justice Ministry Request:

Does HCIC want to participate in the event to be held at the Unitarian Church on October 19? Jefferson said that this is an effort at the local level to work on Social Justice issues and he is interested in participating. Ellen will follow up with the Church to get more information.

Lucy Wallace made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jefferson seconded the Motion. All were in favor.

Adjourned: 8:52 pm