



Harvard Climate Initiative Committee

Meeting Minutes of July 13, 2023

The meeting convened at 7:35 pm on Zoom

Members: Present: Ellen Sachs Leicher, Deborah O'Rourke, Sharon McCarthy, Jaye Waldron, Lucy Wallace, Brian Smith, Rich Marcello, Christiane Turnheim, Staci Donahue

Staff/Guest Present: Pat Natoli

1 – Approval of Minutes – 6/22/23.

Lucy moved to accept minutes. Brian seconded. Approved unanimously.

2 – Events/Outreach Update

Flags - 200 flags have been ordered along with posts for people to place in their yards to announce they are “going green.” Attendants at Earth Day Event emailed to ask them to put actions/testimonials on the Harvard Energize website and they can get a flag. Seem to be a lack of participants putting their information in. Discussion ensued on how to get people to sign up/take actions/get flags. Any ideas, let Ellen know. Agreed to let folks know that this is not like Nextdoor and testimonials have to be approved to go live.

Forestry Management – Met 2 to 3 times with a group of interested citizens including representatives from Harvard Conservation Trust (HCT). Looking to have an event at Horse Knoll property to discuss invasives management and biodiversity. A guided walk is planned for November and signs to be left up for self-guided tours. QR codes will be placed on signs to provide info. Sharon suggested participants should be given more information on what more can be done for biodiversity. One possibility is to have land management coaching for people interested in improving forest management of their lands.

Newsletter Plans – Rich is writing articles for the Harvard Press. August will have an article on Agriculture. Articles will focus on main areas of the CAP. One suggestion is to identify 10 activities that are going well and what has been accomplished, such as numbers of heat pumps and solar panels installed and EVs purchased.

Mailings – HCIC has received funding in the town budget for 2 mailings a year. Need to decide what the focus of the mailings should be. Sharon suggested advertising an event to stimulate

conversation and provide a QR code to the Harvard Energize site. Brian stated that site should include a Progress Report. Lucy said HCIC should provide a snapshot of where the town was in 2010 when it became a Green Community and what it is like now with information on heat pumps and solar panels that Ellen has some data for. Sharon said that information should be put on the site about HES solar panels and how the town taxpayers benefit from it.

1. Other Items – HCIC to participate in the fall Flea Market and Lions Festival. Lions Festival will have EV cars from 3:30 – 5:30. Flea Market will celebrate local produce by creating different food dishes based on different cultures; this may be done with Arm-in-Arm. Request for volunteers for Flea Market: Sharon, Staci, Deborah, Ellen

Rich is publishing a book in the spring about climate change. This could be the basis for a discussion at the library where folks can discuss various measures to address climate change.

A high schooler is proposing to lead the HC2 (Arm in Arm sponsored project) to focus on climate stories from diverse speakers in either February or March.

3 – CAP Implementation Update

- Natural Resources – Preserve wetlands- no change
- Tree clearing/erosion bylaw – no change
- Invasives – no change. Noted that other towns have invasive species committees and Lucy to find out more info, particularly re. program with tools available for borrowing from the library. Should we be talking to the land stewardship committee. Have them come to one of our meetings?
- Soil health through best practices – no change
- Improve habitat for pollinators – changed date to 2024. Reach out to Brian McLain re. table with pollinators/kits at Garden Club event. Focus on native plants
- Flood control/culverts- New FEMA maps coming out. Update and check with Liz Allard – Jaye or Pat to ask. Christiane added that not just the floods themselves but education needed re. risk of trees falling – education needed
- Pond and algae blooms – no change but could use education about fertilizers, etc. Could be part of spring town mailing
- Protective zoning bylaw – OSRD – no change
- Educate about sustainable land use – see forest mgmt. No change
- Climate change and sustainability in all committees – Change to 2024 and ongoing. We need to work more with other committees. Recommending that we appear at other committee meetings to be collaborators. Since we have become the liaisons when we changed how the plan would roll out, we need to attend other town committee meetings, even beyond the liaisons we have. Possibly twice a year as we review our CAP
- Ensure land use and transportation coordinated – not sure what this action is. Possibly related to Ayer Road and development of bike lanes, pedestrian areas, vegetation.

- Sustainable lawn care and electric equipment – no change
- MISSING – should we have Buy Land as this was the message from Apple Country report. Really open space committee and HCT. We could add an action item re. Support of efforts of these committees to purchase land. Ellen to review wording

4 - OSRD Bylaw

On July 17, the Planning Board will open a hearing on the Bylaw. HCIC comments on the Bylaw have been incorporated into the draft. BOH will submit their comments on that day. Any public comments received on the Bylaw will be noted. The intent is to keep the hearing open until the fall town meeting where it will be voted on.

5 - Select Board Goals

Climate has been included in the goals and committees are encouraged to work together on climate-related issues.

6 – Other

Ellen and Brian met with Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro to fill them in on HCIC issues such as how to coordinate with other boards and committees – particularly before items arrive at CPIC. Need to follow-up as to what is asked in CPIC forms and Tim said he would provide individual packets by Dept for us to see. Also 5 year plan and the timing.

New community aggregation rates have been negotiated in a 2-year contract, with the rates being reduced almost 50%. They will also meet with the School Committee on July 24 to discuss their goals and see if they need any help on buildings (energy), transportation, and composting goals.

Adjourned: 8:54 pm