



Climate Action Committee (CAC) Inaugural Meeting 3/22/23

CAAB and CSEC committees merge to form the new CAC

See agenda [here](#)

Motion on chair

- Motion to name Courtney Eaton chair of the new CAC until after town meeting end of April
- Motion passed — will revisit permanent chair at a later meeting
- Clerkship to rotate on a monthly basis

Intros from members

- Committee Members: Courtney Eaton (Acting Chair), Brian Crouse, Jake Swenson, John Bolduc, Paul Kirshen, Ben Slayden, Gavin Colbert, Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Karen Gibson, Jerry Frenkil, Janet Miller, Michael McDonald, Cheryl Baggen

Housekeeping

- Will decide later what day/time to meet
- Still waiting on MA open meeting law for hybrid vs. in-person — sentiment is hybrid (Zoom and in-person) preferred

Chair's update

- Will discuss specialized stretch code public meeting details with warrant articles later in meeting
- Chair's breakfast - most of conversation was the school budget
 - Also an update from Transportation Committee - will likely do a study of town transportation systems - important to follow this

Eric Simms - Sustainability Director Update

- Building codes in town - Warrant Article 23 Specialized Stretch Code
 - There's a base building code, MA adopted stretch code about 10 years ago and updated recently, also created a specialized stretch code — two paths - fossil fuel free or fossil fuel powered by highly efficient - up for vote at town meeting
 - Concord also aiming to participate in pilot for state fossil fuel free buildings program for new construction - first 10 towns for home rule to be on this list — we are currently positioned to sign up for this program and apply — on track to sign up for this (voted yes in 2021 at town meeting and re-upped in January)
 - Means any new construction in Concord will not have any fossil fuel infrastructure (residential and commercial) — there may be some exceptions but would still likely have to adhere to specialized stretch code at base if voted yes in town meeting
 - Effective date would be July 2024
- Still looking at how to use IRA and Infrastructure bill funds — keeping an eye on it; grants.gov for info — would welcome any input on that

- Conversations with Newbury Court about improving energy efficiency and sustainability at that campus - coordinating with them on this
- Concord Park has recently replaced natural gas systems with heat pumps - good case study
- EV Charging - already Level 2 chargers at Rideout - upgrading to Level 3 soon
 - Also alternative fuels - hydrogen, natural gas, etc.
 - John Bolduc: want to make the town and non-profits aware of tax credits with IRA - 30% tax credit for non-profits included (cash equivalent)
- Hanscom Airfield expansion - Concord wants environmental impact assessment and more info on this; see [Concord Bridge article](#)
- 2229 Main Street - Superfund site in town - activity around this — owner asked if the town was interested in acquiring the land - Select Board interested in creating a task force to see if town wants to purchase it
- Town has hired an economic vitality manager to start in April - liaising with the business community in town - hoping to work with them to bring sustainability to business committee
- Approached by a town resident - David Myers - CEO of [ERG Consulting](#) - offered free services to help the town - climate and sustainability expertise

Committee Structure

- a. Will review governance and processes and vote next month - send in feedback - particularly regarding potential progress reports and coordination with other committees
 - Question: what do you need for votes to pass? Unanimous, 2/3, simple majority?
 - Likely simple majority — will research this and figure it out
 - Will rotate clerk every month
 - Think about having both a Chair and a Vice Chair (would not be a successor but would have opportunity to fill in the role)
- b. Potential for sub-committees/working groups?
 - Topic-based or project-based? Would the meetings need to be public?
 - Will research how many people can meet/threshold for OML
 - Will research associate members and other people informally on working group
 - Potential groups: (e.g., Energy, Mitigation, Adaptation/Resilience; Reporting/Metrics)
 - John Bolduc: Could be more specific is better - efficiency

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles - Town Meeting: Sunday, April 30, 2023 at 1pm CCHS

See warrant for town meeting [here](#)

- a. Article 21 – Light Plant Solar Expansion – Middle School
 - An [update](#) on the project - capital cost down to \$7.5M from \$13M b/c battery storage cut in half from 8MWh to 4MWh - rates can drop
 - Discussion around costs
 - Motion to urge affirmative action on Article 21, seconded - **vote passes; CAC backs Article 21**
- b. Article 22 - Municipal In-Town Solar Generation Task Force (Citizen Petition)
 - Discussion around the verbiage of the article - what is expected of CAC
 - Context: CMLP committee discussing whether or not they are supportive
 - Light Plant has changed operational model
 - Questions about whether initial context of 20MW needs to be revisited

- CMLP board might have some amendments for the warrant article
 - CMLP has been dragging its feet — town wants it to do more
 - Jerry - in support - need to move CMLP forward; John Bolduc: supports, and need resilience in the electricity system; Jake - CAC thinking about engagement with CMLP and climate action plan
 - CAC oversight and reporting role with if this Article is passed
 - Motion to vote on warrant in its original text: move that CAC move affirmative action on Article 22 as it appears in warrant, seconded - **vote passes; CAC backs Article 22**
- c. Article 23 – Adopt Specialized Energy Stretch Code (update from Brad H-N. / Matt J.?)
- Motion to urge affirmative action on Article 23, seconded - **vote passes; CAC backs Article 23**
- d. Article 37 – Prohibition of Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers (Citizen Petition)
- Contentious Article in town
 - Two stroke leaf blowers, loud and local air pollution and fossil fuel combustion
 - Question on if it is just handheld blowers
 - Questions on equity of the article — might be better for outreach and education - no vote held
 - Jerry: another way to address this issue — existing electric lawn-mower rebate but for leaf blowers

Next Steps:

- Vulnerability assessment at next meeting
- Will take a Doodle poll for best regular meeting time