



## COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABILITY & ENERGY COMMITTEE

*Meeting Minutes*  
*Tuesday, September 6, 2022*

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Comprehensive Sustainability & Energy Committee was held on September 6, 2022 at 6:00 pm via Zoom. CSEC members present were Sharon Jones, (Chair), Jerry Frenkil, Karen Gibson (Clerk), Janet Miller, Michael McDonald, Doug Sharpe, and Hany Teylouni. Also present were Matt Johnson (Select Board), Owen Brady-Traczyk (Guest speaker), Andy Puchrik, Cheryl Baggen, and Pamela Dritt.

### 1. Welcome and Call to Order

The Chair, Sharon Jones, called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.

### 2. Approval of August Minutes

Karen described a few minor corrections. Janet moved to approve the minutes as amended. Michael seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### 3. Schedule October Meeting

The next CSEC meeting will take place October 20 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

### 4. Good News

- Janet reported that Riverwalk just received the electrical plans to put in place charging for EVs as part of pilot project sponsored by CMLP to install EV charging for multi-unit homes.
- Matt Johnson reported that Concord is eligible as one of ten communities for a pilot project, as part of the state-wide bill for climate and sustainability, to have a fossil-free infrastructure initiative. Sen Barrett, who authored the legislation, indicated the ten eligible towns will participate. There are differences between the legislation and the Town's bylaws that need to be worked out. Concord would be allowed to implement requirements for fossil fuel free new construction or substantial reconstruction. Matt asked Jerry to forward the email and memo about qualifying under affordable housing requirements to the CSEC members.
- Michael reported that DPU has given National Grid financing to find a host community for a geothermal pilot study. The speaker from National Grid, Owen Brady-Traczyk, will speak more to this later on the agenda.

### 5. Chair's Update

Jerry reported that there are 17 candidates for the Town's Sustainability Director. Jerry offered to help review the candidates' qualifications and assist with interviews.

## 6. Upcoming events – Volunteer coordination

- Karen reported that the Ag Committee has given CSEC space for a table at Ag Day on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Karen is only able to attend for the first two hours.
- Janet announced that Discover West Concord Day is on October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Reusit is also scheduled for October 15<sup>th</sup> at CPW on Keyes Road. Janet offered to table for part of the time. Cheryl Baggen offered to help as a volunteer.
- A potential CSEC forum is on the IRA and the MA Climate Act. Jerry checked with MCAN for a potential speaker. He was pointed towards a presentation given by the Green Energy Consumers Alliance on the IRA. There is a YouTube video of that webinar. CSEC could aim to hold a forum on implications for Concord residents in November.

CSEC members went through a list of Concord organizations to liaise with, explore opportunities to collaborate with, and/or table at their events.

Michael asked for a quick update regarding Alcott and Newbury Court boiler related actions. Jerry reported that Alcott has put out an RFP for a study. He will follow up to see how the proposals will be judged and to ask to join the review; he will also ask to join the Sustainability Committee as a CSEC representative.

## 7. Guest Speaker: Owen Brady-Traczy, National Grid re MA Gas Geothermal District Energy Demonstration Program

There are a lot of systems that will be integrated in the future – networked geothermal is one way to do geothermal. The goal is 75% of all building heating and cooling systems in MA and NY will have a heat pump by 2050. Owen described networked geothermal and talked about the difference between networked and single-site geothermal. He described different building profiles. Networked geothermal can offer savings by combining systems. The MA Geothermal Demonstration Program was approved in December 2021. The program is a 5-year program with an approved budget of \$15.6M for 4 installations that will serve 100-200 customers (20-40 heat pumps). The DPU set out 4 conditions that must be met, collectively, from connecting facilities with diverse load profiles to alternative to Leak Prone Pipe replacement, to managing gas system constraints to supporting low income and environmental justice communities. Participants will pay a monthly fee in addition to their electric bill. Participants receive the installation of the networked geothermal system and will have the costs covered to fully convert to electric appliances. Learning objects through the program include: understanding how much efficiency the shared loops provide, whether they satisfy peak day needs without backup heating and cooling, and the feasibility to develop geothermal networks in lieu of leak-prone pipe replacement in an area. Other learning objects center around financial questions around cost savings, efficiencies, and equity.

Sharon asked about commercial vs residential. DPU felt residential has already been vetted, so the program would not cover exclusively residential unless there are conditions that were unique. Matt speculated that a potential site in Concord might be Stow Street,

from the Library, the Emerson Umbrella Arts Center, a mixed affordable condominium site, the Hunt Recreation Center, public housing to the Arsenal, in addition to residential houses. The street includes a mixed set of uses where a lot the facilities are largely owned by or managed by the Town. Concord offers will and interest in this kind of program. Owen will share the information gathering form with interested parties in Concord.

Michael asked if all heating, even on the coldest days, would be serviced by geothermal or if there was a commitment to maintaining back up fuel? Owen responded that ideally the goal is to design the geothermal system to provide 100% of the heating and cooling needs. Matt asked how many tons of capacity can be put in the right of way per linear feet. Owen pointed toward a study that looked at representative street segments.

Sharon asked if National Grid would be offering geothermal to individual homeowners in the future. Owen responded that networking geothermal will not always be the best option. Putting in an individual system might be easier and cheaper, so this needs to remain a possibility. National Grid might be interested in providing individual geothermal, but there may be regulatory issues that need to be worked out first.

Jerry asked about the timeframe for picking test sites and implementing. Owen responded that the first site will be selected in the coming months—December/January; some of the construction would be done in 2023, and hopefully up and running by early spring or summer of 2024. In parallel they will be reviewing and selecting additional sites. Owen suggested that if Concord is interested, the next step would be to fill out the information gathering form. Matt noted that as opposed to gas or electric infrastructure where the public right of way is the means of transmission, in the case of geothermal it's the means of production—will municipalities in the future have an interest in that it's their land that's producing the power?

8. Member Updates – Coordination with Liaison Organizations  
Discussed earlier in the agenda.

9. Public Comment

Pamela Dritt, 13 Concord Green, asked if CSEC would pull together an engineering delegation to talk to the developers of the affordable housing and senior assisted living facility behind the prison to build all electric.

Cheryl Baggen, 3 Bolton Street, is interested in joining CSEC. She is a lawyer by training and a teacher of high school biology.

Pamela Dritt reported that First Parish in Concord is looking into geothermal heat pumps.

10. Adjourn

Janet said that this was a fascinating talk and thanked Owen for his presentation. The committee adjourned at 8:05pm.