

Green Energy Committee (GEC)
Approved Minutes
February 9, 2023, 8am

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/9423538880?pwd=bkFNN0hIY2NMRllldnlWdHNzMVFIQT09>

Meeting ID: 942 3538 8880 **Password:** 460113 **Dial by your location:** 646-876- 9923

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.

Members Present: Roy Harvey, Ed Kern, Sue Klem, Paul Shorb (chair).

Others Present: Alex Chatfield, Jennifer Glass (Select Board representative), Trisha O’Hagan, Mick Mountz (Lincoln resident), Scott Rodman, Chuck Sizer, Collette Sizer.

Call to Order

Shorb called the meeting to order at 8:08 a.m. Paul welcomed Mick Mountz, a concerned resident, to the meeting and explained the GEC mission.

Approval of January 12 Meeting Minutes

Shorb asked for corrections to the minutes. Several corrections and edits were incorporated. Shorb moved that the minutes be approved. Kern seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as amended.

Roll Call:

Roy Harvey	Aye
Ed Kern	Aye
Sue Klem	Aye
Paul Shorb	Aye

Prep for 2023 Town Meeting

The Select Board has confirmed that GEC can sponsor two warrants, one to adopt the energy code and a second to adopt a measure to keep Lincoln in the 10-town pilot program. The Planning Board has this topic on its February 14 agenda, where GEC will seek that Board’s endorsement of both articles.

- **Action Item:** GEC should prepare a short slide deck for the Planning Board meeting. That presentation can cover both warrant articles together.

The Committee discussed whether to follow the warrant article and bylaw template that the DOER has recommended for participating in the ten-town pilot.

- The GEC has been in favor of exempting back-up generators; that exemption may already be in the code that would be incorporated into the ten-town pilot, but that is not yet completely clear.
- Shorb stated that although Lincoln cannot tinker with what is in the Stretch Code or the Municipal Opt-in Code, DOER has opined that for purposes of the ten-town pilot, a town such as Lincoln has the right to define what counts as “fossil fuel free”. Therefore, Lincoln seems to have the right for purposes of the ten-town pilot to be more or less restrictive regarding emergency generators than whatever is in the stretch Code or the Municipal Opt-in Code.

Points raised in the discussion that followed included:

- Scott predicted that in the future, most new all-electric houses likely will have battery back-up. However, right now such battery systems are very expensive.
- Houses that will be built in compliance with either the new Stretch Code or the Municipal Opt-in Code will be so well-insulated that they can stay warm for days even after losing electrical power, so there will be less need for an emergency generator.
- Nevertheless, the GEC has been in favor of exempting emergency generators, because of concerns expressed by many Lincolmites about loss of local electric power would impact an all-electric house.
- There is a climate-related argument for allowing emergency generators only if they are fueled from a propane tank, rather than by natural gas piped in from the street:
 - Gas pipelines often leak, and their methane is an extra-potent global-warming gas.
 - Propane tank systems seem less likely to leak.
 - Lincoln already has homes whose emergency generators are fueled by propane tanks, so that solution seems feasible and reasonable.
- Where a gas line from the street to the house footprint is not already in place, installing a gas line may be substantially more expensive than putting in a tank and the homeowner must fund the line from street to house, so this may discourage residents from putting in new gas lines. However, this incentive would not apply where such a line is already in place.
- There will be only a few new houses built or deeply rebuilt in Lincoln per year, to which the ten-town pilot would apply. Therefore, the main reason to try to limit emergency generators to propane-fueled ones would be to set a good precedent for the rest of the state.
- The GEC members investigating the potential propane-only approach (primarily Harvey and Shorb) have not yet completely researched and resolved all the technical questions around its costs and benefits.

- Allowing all types of emergency generators, rather than only propane-fueled, would make the by-law easier to pass.
- Mountz expressed concern that entering into the ten-town pilot would give electric companies a monopoly. Shorb responded that there is competition for electric supply, and a monopoly exists only on delivery.

After the above discussion, Shorb moved that GEC (A) propose for Town Meeting the warrant article and bylaw template that the DOER has recommended for participating in the ten-town pilot, assuming it allows emergency generators that use any fuel and (B) if does not exempt allows any emergency generators that use fossil fuels, then GEC would propose adding such an exemption. Sue Klem seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Roy Harvey	Aye
Ed Kern	Aye
Sue Klem	Aye
Paul Shorb	Aye

The Committee discussed how to provide public education prior to the Town Meeting.

- Harvey suggested an educational packet for homeowners, builders, and architects to explain options for backup systems. Many generators can use either so-called natural gas (primarily methane) or propane.
- GEC could host a webinar and prepare materials with FAQs on the GEC website prior to the Town meeting. One webinar could be scheduled such that it leaves time for a second webinar if one is needed.
- An announcement can be put in the Select Board newsletter (March 3 deadline).
- Klem emphasized the importance of offering a session to educate and provide an opportunity for residents to voice concerns. She proposed two open meetings.
- **Action Item:** Shorb, Harvey, O’Hagan, and Chatfield offered to help with preparation. Rodman and Glass offered to review drafts.

Proposed Expansion at Hanscom Airport

The Committee discussed whether GEC should submit a comment on the airport expansion before the February 14 deadline.

- Elliot explained that the expansion has been in planning since 2017. This is the first public meeting to reveal the scope of the project and ask for feedback.
- Elliot is writing a letter for HFAC (Hanscom Field Advisory Commission).
 - HFAC would like to make a statement that reflects the wishes of the four surrounding communities.

- HFAC interacts regularly with MassPort and has a long-standing relationship. The HFAC organization has no power but may have influence.
- The developers have indicated there will be a reduction in ferry flights. They should be asked to clarify whether they assert that a net reduction in flights and emissions will result, and to document any such claim.
- The project proponent will need to respond to the questions received.
- Chatfield informed the Committee that the MassPort agenda is to relieve congestion at Logan by off-loading private jets to Hanscom. A coalition should be formed to work with Governor Healey and MassPort to prevent the expansion.
- A large concern is the size of jets that will be allowed. Information on the expansion references class 4 jets, which would be a major change.
- GEC members agreed to get a letter on file, and Kern offered to participate in preparing a draft. However, the Select Board or Planning Board may be submitting one.
- **Action Item:** Shorb will take the lead and inquire whether the Select Board is submitting a letter. GEC will endorse a Select Board or Planning Board letter or if necessary, generate one from GEC.

Shorb moved that the meeting be adjourned. Kern seconded. There was no longer a quorum at this time. The meeting was adjourned at 9:41a.m.

Roll call:

Roy Harvey	Aye
Ed Kern	Aye
Paul Shorb	Aye

The next meeting will be March 9, 2022, 8:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Collette Sizer, Minute-Taker
 February 11, 2022