

Lincoln Green Energy Committee (GEC)

Minutes from October 14, 2021 Meeting

Prepared by Edward Kern

Member attending: Ed Lang, Ed Kern, Sue Klem, Paul Shorb, Roy Harvey, Jim Hutchinson,

Liaison and Guests: Alex Chatfield, Audrey Kalmus, Belinda Gingrich, Jennifer Glass (Select Board liaison), Lynne Smith, Staci Montori, Trish O'Hagan, Chuck Sizer

### Meeting on Zoom called to order at 08:02

Minutes from prior meeting were available only shortly prior to meeting and approval of them was passed over until the November meeting.

### GEC Logo

Sue Klem reported concerns that the white hands in our logo did not comport with diversity aspirations of the Town. Sue will pursue appropriate changes.

### Lincoln Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan ("CAP") subcommittee will make a presentation at the State of the Town ("SOTT") regarding the idea of developing a CAP. Sue and others have been meeting with other Town Boards and groups (so far including the Select Board, Water Dept., Conservation commission, and Agriculture Commission) and finding considerable interest in addressing climate impacts from Town operations. The subcommittee is pulling together a compilation of Town efforts and aspirations, with a goal of presenting a summary at SOTT meeting of why we should have a CAP, what it could include, and how it would be developed. Jen Curtain in the Planning Department will be available as a resource as to support the development and implementation of the CAP.

The question was raised, what would the related GEC "ask" be at the 2022 Town Meeting?

- Sue suggested it should include a commitment to complete a CAP and fund a sustainability director position (which might be shared with one or more other towns; Paula Vaughn is already looking into funding possibilities from MAPC and elsewhere).
- Audrey suggested that the CAP development process could move quickly enough in early 2022 that we could actually propose a CAP for adoption at that Town Meeting. That process needs to be very inclusive, but it also should be planned with an end date.
- Roy noted that the Sierra Club is tabulating what other towns are doing, which in effect provides a menu of options we can consider.
- Trish O'Hagan spoke to the possibility of banning new gas hook-ups. Currently that must take the form of a "home rule petition," requires approval by the state legislature. Concord has done this.

### Municipal electricity use

Jim Hutchison reported that the Town buys all its electricity through a Massachusetts municipal aggregation program, Power Options, which includes low-cost national renewable energy credits (which many experts advise do not actually lead to reduced GHG emissions). He said that contract is scheduled to expire in October 2023. A discussion ensued as to asking Power Options to upgrade our account to

100% Massachusetts Class 1 RECs when the Power Options contract is due for renewal. Ed Kern suggested that would foster greater buying power on part of the program, likely reduce costs for residents, and demonstrate consistent leadership in urging townspeople to “Opt-Up” to 100% Green Electricity. Jim volunteered to find out what it would cost the Town to leave its existing contract early.

### Green House Gas Inventory Update

Ed Kern reported speaking with James Booth and planning to start updating his prior inventory of Lincoln’s carbon emissions. James will be doing this pro bono, working with Ed Kern. We’d like to capture the impact of the Green Energy program. Roy Harvey volunteered to assist, and Charles Sizer also expressed interest in participating. The plan (which has not progressed yet) is to work via a shared spreadsheet online that would identify (hopefully) online sources for all the inputs to the inventory.

There was discussion of how often to update these reports. Ed Kern suggested that doing it annually would serve to keep how it is done within the LGEC “corporate” memory. Lynne Smith suggested that things don’t change so fast as require updating the estimates annually. Others suggested that given COVID since 3/2020, short-term phenomena have skewed emissions in ways that perhaps are not indicative of long-term trends and progress.

Ed Kern pointed out that reaching net zero carbon emissions probably will require us to count drawdown of carbon that is attributable to the Town via photosynthesis. It’s unclear whether trying to quantify carbon sequestration by trees etc. is something that Booth could do or whether we’d need to look at that though a separate, parallel process; maybe Booth could at least include a placeholder estimates for carbon capture?

It was also suggested that we consider using the Metropolitan Area Planning Council GHG inventory tool recently released for municipal assessments.

Ed Lang wants to be able to measure energy usage in Town better. Ed Kern said there is a database that is available, but who would mine it? Jim said he would investigate that; Chuck Sizer expressed interest in helping with data analysis.

### Residential Subcommittee

Sue Klem noted that the residential subcommittee needs more support/volunteers. Activities could include tabling events to promote ongoing community outreach regarding heat pumps, residential energy audits, and electric vehicles.

Meeting Adjourned at 0933 with unanimous approval of members still present.

Respectfully submitted

Ed Kern