

Approved minutes for 1/27/25

(VIRTUAL) MEETING OF THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN COMMITTEE

Monday, January 27th 2025

7:00 pm

Remote Access

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/emt-fgzc-yhf>

Present:

Molly Cochran

Janet Weinstein

Michael Horan

James Conlon

Rachel Lazerus

Aisha Oloyede-Edward

special guest: Paul Lauenstein from Sharon Sustainability Coalition

1. Welcome: Mr. Horan made a motion to open the meeting, Ms. Oyolede-Edward seconded: meeting officially began at 7:02 PM by unanimous roll call vote

2. Review of Minutes: Mr. Horan made a motion to accept the minutes from January 6th as amended, Mr. Conlon seconded, motion passed via unanimous roll-call vote.

3. Sharon Sustainability Coalition: Mr. Lauenstein, a member of the Sharon Sustainability Coalition, came to talk to share some of the successes and setbacks faced by the SSC over the last few years:

- Mr. Lauenstein started as part of the Sharon water committee and was able to reduce use of water by 30%
- in 2019 four teenagers went to town meeting to get an article passed for a goal of being zero-emissions (not carbon neutral) by 2050.
- The Sustainable Sharon Coalition is a 501©3 that started around 2015 that provides community solar, solar sources (if Sharon residents sign up through the SSC website the org gets some money from the company), a waste program with

“pay as you throw” trash (Ms. Cochran noted that implementing “pay as you throw” met with huge resistance from Stoughton residents), and putting textile recyclable bins around town which earn \$500-\$700 per pound and can fund nonprofits.

- 80-85% of textiles do not get recycled, so by putting them in a recycling shed, we’re just expanding the pie, not taking away from schools.
- Sharon currently focused on adding solar panels to the high school
- Wants to do an annual inventory of the cars via excise tax to monitor how quickly the transition from gasoline to electric vehicles is moving
- Built a solar canopy at one elementary school in the parking lot but people in the neighborhood vetoed a second because they disliked the way it looked
 - Solar panels and solar canopies generally pay for themselves very quickly
 - Municipal Project Oversight Committee formed because of the pushback on solar canopies, trying to prevent blow-up/backlash.
- Solar installations from the energy advisory committee reduced taxes by \$1 million/year
- “If we had gradually started building up 40 years ago, we wouldn’t have to choose between solar panels and virgin forest now.”
- Recommends solaredge.com for tracking solar panels use.
- The community aggregation of “Sharon power choice”:
<https://www.masspowerchoice.com/sharon> (cheaper than Eversource) – “you’ll be using so much less energy with solar panels that it’s still cheaper to pay for the clean energy than it would be to have no solar panels.”
 - Stoughton already has community aggregation: need to do outreach and messaging.

4. MAPC update: Climate Equity Training: Ms. Lazerus presented about the Climate Equity Training MAPC had held on January 16th, which went very well. The roundtable discussions were so effective at identifying resources and possibilities that Ms. Lazerus suggested more roundtables and intra-town communication, and MAPC is starting to develop a plan for that now.

5. Town Manager Recycling Campaign: The Town Manager stopped by the climate equity training to talk about the upcoming solid waste crisis where the cost could jump tenfold. Town’s recycling rate is 9% (though 85% of homes recycle – could be that while 85% of homes recycle, they’re not recycling everything they could). Town Manager wants to develop programs involving students, teachers, and the curriculum at public schools, getting kids to learn about recycling and getting their families to recycle. Ms. Cochran noted that we could talk about composting as well, and noted that we should be in contact with recycling coordinator, recycling

club in schools. Ms. Lazerus suggests contacting the school committee chair to get on the agenda.

6. Martin Luther King, Jr. event: The event was beautiful but our table was not in an effective place to get traffic.

7. Other business that cannot be anticipated: Ms. Lazerus mentioned that the current AI models that have been using lots of natural resources were just shown to be easily matched by much smaller and more resource-efficient models such as deepthink.

8. Public Comment (name/precinct): n/a

9. Mr. Horan made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Weinstein seconded, the motion passed via unanimous toll-call, meeting ended at 8:22.

Next meeting: Feb 10th at 7:00

Minutes accepted on Feb 10th