

2023 REPORT



Background:

The Edgartown Climate Committee was formed in January 2022
The current 5 members were appointed by the Select Board

- Julia Livingston, Chair
- Kevin Loughlin, Associate Chair
- Jennifer Blum
- Josey Kirkland
- Peter Kirn

Mission

The mission of the Edgartown Climate Committee is:

- to collect and record information through the lens of climate change;
- to educate our community with information to support the process of adaptation;
- to remain committed to being organic and ongoing in the pursuit of knowledge and action;
- to fortify our objectives by conveying the power of will as we urgently and tenaciously strive to protect our community in facing and resolving the harmful effects of climate change.

Key 2023 Initiatives

1. Propose zoning bylaw updates to respond to climate change
2. Alert Town Department Chairs of MVC Climate Actions which list their departments as partners
3. Update and distribute Edgartown Climate Action rack card to visitors/residents
4. Share and learn best practices from fellow town Climate Committees
5. Participate in both the Master Plan process and the Harbor Management Plan



Key Initiative #1: Zoning Bylaw Updates to Respond to Climate Change

- Worked with Planning Board to submit funding warrant for April 2023 Town Meeting
- Funds were approved by the Edgartown voters to develop zoning bylaw updates, including changes to assist in adaptation to climate change
- The Planning Board created the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee with 5 members
- Climate Committee Chair Julia Livingston elected Chair of the Bylaw Review Committee
- Boston legal expert hired to assist in current bylaw review and to recommend changes
- Planning Board approved submission of 8 zoning bylaw changes for April 2024 Town Meeting
- Public hearing on proposed bylaw changes on February 20 at 5:30 on zoom
- Proposed bylaw changes to be voted on by Town residents during April 2024 Town Meeting



Key Initiative #2: Alert Town Department Chairs to Specific MVC Climate Actions

MVC CAP/Climate Action Plan for the Island

- Published in 2022 and titled “The Vineyard Way”
- MVC Climate Change Coordinator Liz Durkee provided update to the Select Board 12/18/23

MVC requested the help of all six island town Climate Committees

To communicate with town departments to alert them to the CAP actions which list their departments as partners

Edgartown Climate Committee Members Met with Town Departments and Committees

The 2023 meetings were follow ups to our 2022 Town Department meetings

- The 2022 meetings with Department Chairs focused on:
 - exploring Department responsibilities relating to climate change
 - collecting information each Town Department wanted the public to know about what they’re doing related to climate change
- The 2023 meetings focused on
 - discussing CAP actions which list the Department as a partner
 - learning Department Chair new climate change concerns and program updates



Key Initiative #2: Alert Town Department Chairs to Specific MVC Climate Actions (cont.)

Department Meeting Key Findings:

Wastewater Dept

- A Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan is nearing completion and has a goal of making the entire sewer system resilient to the 100 year flood level plus 3 feet
- Replaced 6 pumps with pumps that use substantially less electric power
- Currently 1300 homes on sewer and 5000 on septic; many could tie into existing sewer but haven't; need to incentivize/provide loans to cover costs
- Sewer removes nitrogen better than any septic, therefore sewer is better for pond and watershed health
- Hope to extend sewer to Sengekontacket watershed in the next 5+ years

Highway Dept

- Repaired and improved stormwater drains and retention areas (key for increased storm intensity)
- Would like to turn suitable undeveloped land into stormwater retention sites that also serve as public open space
- Would like to require wider setbacks and limit how much of a lot can be covered by impervious structures and surfaces
- Need to enforce requirement that property owners prune back hedges to ensure safe sidewalk passage
- Would like to add bicycle parking areas and rework bike routes to avoid heavily trafficked Upper Main Street; recommend a town committee with responsibility for road and bike path signage



Department Meeting Key Findings (cont.)

Shellfish Dept

- Increased storms negatively impact oyster farms and equipment; Norton Point Breach washed away Katama Bay shellfish beds
- Warmer water causing more bacteria impacting oyster industry
- Ocean acidification hinders clam shell calcification resulting in fewer steamer clams
- Importance of oysters/scallops which remove excess nitrogen from our waters

Historic District Commission

- For buildings that are threatened by sea level rise, the Commission does not want to be presented with renovation plans to raise these buildings up above the expected new water levels and would rather see these buildings renovated so that storm surges can wash through the first floor without doing major damage. Building systems should be located on the upper levels of these buildings.

MV Refuse Disposal & Resource Recovery District

- Recycling is sent to Zero Waste in Rochester MA which sorts co-mingled recycling. None of the district's recycling which is sent to Zero Waste is rejected.
- MVRD notes that the \$35 town residents pay for recycling their cans/bottles and paper is a small price to pay for helping to keep our beautiful island sustainable.



Key Initiative #3 Climate Action Rack Card Updated for 2023 and Distributed

Two-sided rack card

Side one of the card lists governmental climate change actions specific to Edgartown in 2023

Side two of the card lists climate action recommendations for visitors to Edgartown/MV

Distribution

Edgartown realtors for their rental packets and a pdf for their websites/to email clients

Rack cards are available at Edgartown Library, Church Street and Triangle Post Offices, the Edgartown School and the Town Hall

Town businesses provided with rack cards to display



Climate Change

2023

Edgartown climate actions this year:

- Edgartown voted at Town Meeting to ban the sale of “nip” bottles to cut down on single use plastic and reduce litter across the Island.
- Edgartown voters approved funds to develop and propose updates to the Zoning Bylaw to enable the Town to respond to ongoing climate change.
- Edgartown is now part of the Massachusetts Green Communities program. A Green Communities grant will provide LED lighting at the Edgartown School and contribute to the cost of six new pumps for the wastewater treatment plant, significantly reducing Town electricity use.
- The Town’s ranking matrix for capital programs was updated to include a 10% weight value for projects that support climate resiliency.
- A ten acre solar array is in the works at the capped Meshacket landfill. It will generate roughly 4.8 million kilowatt hours of energy per year, saving more than 3,400 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions.
- Two cables were laid in Edgartown waters east of Chappaquiddick to take electricity from offshore wind turbines to the Massachusetts power grid.



2023

Climate Change

Actions you can take:

- **REFUSE** items which will become trash; **REDUCE** what you use/ buy; **REUSE** what you can; **RECYCLE** what you can’t reuse.
- Bring **reusable** shopping bags and recycle clean plastic bags at Stop & Shop.
- **Shop local** to support Island farms, local fisheries, and small businesses and to reduce your carbon footprint.
- Buy a shellfish license and **harvest** some shellfish.
- Carry a personal **water bottle** and go to vineyardconservation.org/tap-map to find FREE water bottle refill stations.
- **Compost** food scraps; don’t put grease down the drain; and don’t use a garbage disposal.
- **Use less water** to wash dishes, shower, shave, and brush your teeth.
- **Only** toilet tissue goes in the toilet; no wipes or personal products.
- **Don’t idle** your vehicle, even for a short amount of time.
- **Dispose** of fishing gear, balloons, straws, and other plastics properly so they don’t end up on beaches or harming ocean wildlife.
- Ride our **electric** public buses and bike or walk when possible.
- **Keep off** dunes and marsh grasses. They provide important habitat and protect the Island from storm surges.





Climate Change

Actions you can take:

- Shop local to support our farms, local fishers, small businesses, and reduce your carbon footprint
- Avoid balloons and plastic containers, straws, and utensils to reduce plastic waste which has to get shipped off Island
- Bring your own reusable water bottles and shopping bags to reduce plastic waste and paper bag waste
- Refill your water bottles at free refill stations located throughout the Island instead of buying bottled water
- Turn off your car engine instead of idling it to minimize emissions and save fuel
- Ride bikes and electric public buses and walk when possible to reduce fossil fuel use
- Stay off dunes and marsh grasses because they protect us from storm surges
- Dispose of fishing gear and single use plastics so they don't end up on beaches or harming ocean wildlife
- Wash the dishes, shave, and brush your teeth without keeping the water running to conserve the Island's fresh water
- Take shorter showers to save energy and water
- Compost food scraps and recycle to reduce waste on the Island

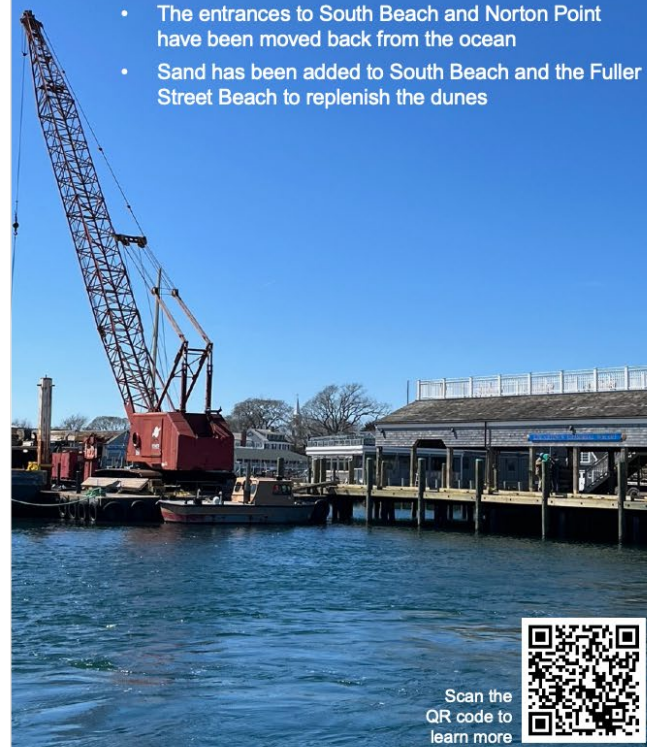


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Donna M. Blackburn

Climate Change

Actions Edgartown has been taking:

- Memorial Wharf has been raised two feet
- Inductive chargers have been installed under Church Street so the VTA can transition to all electric buses
- Electric car chargers have been installed at the Park and Ride lot at Dark Woods Road
- The entrances to South Beach and Norton Point have been moved back from the ocean
- Sand has been added to South Beach and the Fuller Street Beach to replenish the dunes



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Key Initiative #4: Share and Learn Best Practices from Fellow Town Climate Committees

Participated in May 2023 Island Climate Action Fair at the Ag Hall

- Every Island town Climate Committee hosted information tables, providing public outreach/education

Participated in July 2023 Island Town Climate Committee Workshop hosted by MVC Climate Change Coordinator Liz Durkee

- Each town Education Committee shared their 2022 accomplishments and current initiatives
- Edgartown's Climate Committee's rack card and ongoing meetings with Town Department Chairs were initiatives which other town committees applauded and planned to replicate in their towns

Participated in monthly CAP Community Coordinating Committee meetings which bring together the Town Climate and Energy Committees to share ideas

Key Initiative #5 Participate in both Master Plan Process and Harbor Management Plan

- Climate Committee Chair Julia Livingston participates in Master Plan meetings
 - Julia advocated for a plan to protect Dock Street and the Dock Street parking lot from anticipated sea level rise and more intense and more frequent storms
- Climate Committee Member Peter Kirn participates in Harbor Management Plan meetings
 - Peter advocated for including the electrification of the Chappy Ferry



2024 Climate Committee Goals:

1. Continue conversations with Town Department Chairs re: MVC Climate Actions
2. Create and distribute 2024 Edgartown Climate Action rack card to visitors/residents
3. Continue to share and learn best practices from fellow town Climate Committees
4. Continue participation in both Master Plan process and Harbor Management Plan
5. Continue participation on Zoning Bylaw Review Committee