

CLIMATE COMMITTEE  
TOWN OF EDGARTOWN

MINUTES OF ZOOM MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2022

Julia Livingston, the chair of the committee, opened the meeting at 4:12 PM.

The following members of the committee were present on zoom, as follows:

Jennifer Blum  
Josey Kirkland  
Peter Kirn  
Julia Livingston  
Kevin Loughlin  
Cari Williamson

In addition, Alan Strahler, Alan Feldman and Bruce Fowle were present on zoom as invited guests.

The first order of business was public comment, but no members of the public were present other than the invited guests.

The next order of business was a motion to approve the minutes of the July 12 meeting, which had previously been emailed to all committee members. There was a motion duly seconded, no discussion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

The third order of business was an update about the 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 card. Jennifer is contacting the chairs of the climate committees of the other five towns (Melinda Loberg - Vineyard Haven, Bill Cleary - Oak Bluffs, Kate Warner - West Tisbury, Rob Hannemann - Chilmark, Bill Lake, Aquinnah) to tell them about the cards. Peter reported that, at the end of July, he took more cards to the brokers in Edgartown for their August rental packages. Alan Feldman said he had posted the card at the Chappaquiddick Community Center and handed some out on Chappaquiddick. Cari put cards at the Edgartown Library and several businesses in Town. The general feeling was that the card was well received, and we should update it in early 2023 in time to be included in summer magazines. Josey asked to have some cards at Felix Neck, and Peter undertook to deliver them. Peter will also mail a card to Donna Blackburn, so she can see how we used the logo she designed. Cari mentioned a somewhat similar card she saw on Block Island on the theme of "How to enjoy our island." We should review this card when revising our card in early 2023.

Next there was a discussion about our meetings with leaders of Town departments. It was agreed that Wednesday, September 28 would be the deadline to send one idea from each report to Jennifer. This should be the idea the department leader wants to get out to the public or, if there isn't one, the most salient point from the interview. Follow up calls to department leaders may be made in some cases. When these are collected and in good shape, we will run them by James Hagerty and ask to make a report at a Select Board meeting.

The next order of business was a discussion of the current state of the Edgartown Master Plan. Kevin expressed his concern that public attendance at meetings has been lower than it should be. He feels there is a lack of urgency and a lack of understanding of the severity of the challenges. He hopes the Master Plan will be a call to arms - a launch point for public awareness. There was a general feeling that the Climate Committee may want to take public positions on some matters in the Master Plan. The schedule is that there should be a draft available to the public later this month, and the plan should be final in December. As a first step we will identify 6-8 specific topics that seem to warrant in depth articles in the Gazette

and/or the Times. The topics may or may not be Edgartown specific, but it was recognized that Edgartown and the other two down island towns have working waterfronts that present issues that are not faced by the up island towns. Cari suggested that, for some topics, we may want to join forces with climate committees from other towns and/or Chappaquiddick. Kevin will comb through the MVC Climate Action Plan and send all of us a first cut at a list of 6-8 specific topics.

Next there was a discussion of the Climate Committee page on the Edgartown website. Julia undertook to send Adam Darack an email with a pdf of the 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 card and a link to the ICAN/MVC climate pledge, so they can be added to the page.

Next there was a discussion of the Building Electrification Accelerator (BEA) program in Massachusetts. This is a program that will allow Massachusetts cities and towns to prohibit fossil fuel connections and require wiring for electric vehicle chargers in new construction and substantial renovations. Alan Strahler said that the Edgartown Energy Committee is actively working with the Vineyard Sustainable Energy Committee (VSEC) on possible articles for the Town Meeting Warrant concerning BEA and amendments to the stretch building code.

Alan Feldman reported that the project to install solar panels and a large battery at the Chappaquiddick Community Center is moving forward and should be completed by December. He said there is a memorandum of understanding with the Town that the Community Center will be the emergency shelter for Chappaquiddick. A grant from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is expected, and a portion of the cost is being paid from the proceeds of the Chappaquiddick point to post road race. This will be the first microgrid in Massachusetts using solar power for an emergency shelter. The Chappaquiddick Island Association (CIA) is also moving forward to establish a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) similar to the one established in Aquinnah.

Julia described a list of possible zoning bylaw changes that she has been working on with Jennifer as a result of the interview with the Edgartown Building Inspector. Ideas have been collected from numerous sources, and the list is getting close to being ready to go out to all members of the Climate Committee and the Master Plan steering committee. Cari said that a few years ago the Historic District Commission proposed an impermeable coverage limit for lots in the Historic District, but the idea did not move forward. She feels there should also be larger setback requirements. The hope was expressed that the Master Plan would be the impetus to get zoning bylaw changes moving forward.

Josey reported that she is working with students from the high school and the charter school on the Climate Cafés for this year. The first one will be on Sunday, October 16 at 10 am at Rosewater Café. The topic will be "Housing and the Climate Crisis."

Josey suggested that our next meeting should have an agenda item to think broadly about inviting more diverse voices to participate in the Climate Committee.

There was a unanimous vote to adjourn at 5:10 pm.