

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Stow Green Advisory Committee (GAC) Thursday,
February 8, 2024

Stow Town Building, 2nd Floor Whitney Room
380 Great Road, Stow, MA

Committee Members Attending:

Arnie Epstein – Committee Chair, Energy Manager, Sharon Brownfield – Vice Chair, John Colonna-Romano (JCR) – Planning Board, Hector Constantzos – Selectboard , John Sangermano – Resident at Large

Resident: Mike Duclos

Zoom: Mike Duclos, Dave Korn, Resident at large

Minutes:

1. Review of minutes from January 11, 2024

GAC voted to approve the amended minutes. Unanimous Ayes.

2. Residents' Items

No residents' items.

3. Graphics Designer

Bonnie Katz of Bonnie Katz Design has been selected as our graphic designer for the climate action plan. She asked if we had considered the design for the cover. We had not. It was recommended that we look at the covers of other town's climate action plans for ideas.

She also asked if the climate snapshots and all graphs and tables would be in Microsoft word or excel. She can work in that format.

Sharon will invite her to the next meeting. She will be first on the agenda so she could leave as we go through the CAP changes based on resident feedback.

4. Select the icons.

Sharon showed a group of icons from Shutterstock. The committee picked out one icon for each section. A table of the icons will be created up front to highlight the icons that will be used for each section.

Sharon will then buy the icons and share them with Bonnie.

5. Review the annual report.

The committee reviewed the annual report. JCR wanted to clarify that the dates mentioned in the report were for last year – 2023. Sharon will make those changes.

The GAC voted to approve the annual report as amended. Unanimous ayes.

6. Review Comments and Proposed Updates to the CAP

Feedback from Allan Fierce and the Planning Board were just received, and those comments have not been incorporated. Most of the other comments from residents have been incorporated.

The comments received were constructive and supportive of the work that went into the document. Some specific comments that still need to be addressed

1. The tone of the Call to Action was considered by some as too fluffy. It did not speak to the benefits of acting (George Peterman) and doesn't convey a sense of urgency (Mike Duclos, Allan Fierce).

JCR mentioned that the balance between building a sense of the crisis and need for urgent action while giving hope that action will make a difference is tricky. Sharon has sent The Call to Action to another outside review to get another thought.

2. It was felt that the incentives were not as prominent as they should be (Mark Harnett, Allan Fierce)

One proposed resolution would be to create a webpage on the town's website highlighting the rebates and providing links to the source such as Hudson Light and Power. Point the reader to that link in the CAP – Call to Action. By providing the links to the source then the person or organization providing the incentive/rebates would have the responsibility of updating. Arnie had done a mockup of a potential website.

3. It was felt that the action plans were not concrete and would pose problems for implementation and accountability. (George Peterman, Mike Duclos). For example, the action plans do not indicate who is responsible or the effort required.

Denise expects the GAC to provide the oversight for the implementation of the CAP. The committee discussed what its role would be and the involvement of others. The need to work with other volunteer groups and boards and move to individual actions.

Arnie proposed adding a separate section on the role of the Green Advisory Committee as overseer. The committee would need to report on progress and update the CAP on an annual basis.

4. Several reviewers felt there needed to be an Executive Summary (Dave Gray, Mike Duclos)

JCR and Sharon will draft an executive summary for review by the committee.

Next Steps:

Arnie will set up a meeting with the Planning Committee and members of GAC to go over the feedback.

John will meet with Kathy Sferra to go through her comments on the Natural Solutions section.

All proposed changes based on the feedback will be put in the CAP in suggestion mood. The committee will review those comments at the next meeting.

It was noted that all comments that went through the Green Advisory email would be part of the public record. Individual communication outside of the meeting doesn't have to be documented. Back and forth discussion by email or in-person, as long as a quorum is present, can be brought back to the committee for discussion. Detailed documentation is not required.

It was felt that the selectboard may want or should approve the content of the report. Denise has included the draft CAP as part of the Selectboard's correspondence package for their next meeting on February 13. Hector will ask the Selectboard if they want to approve the content of the CAP. If so, then it would be scheduled for the following meeting on March 12th.

An aggressive goal would be to incorporate all feedback on the CAP by February 22. The GAC can approve the content then and send the final CAP to the Selectboard for approval. Then the plan could go to Bonnie. At the next committee meeting, the GAC will talk to Bonnie about a timeline and what the GAC can expect.

7. New Business

Arnie informed the committee that the town received a \$500,000 Green Communities building decarbonization grant. We were only one of two committees to receive the grant. This grant was for the library renovation. The design was revised because the bids were over budget. The revised design once approved by the building committee must be communicated to the Green Communities since the application had the original design.

The GAC discussed extending the review but decided to keep the deadline for tomorrow.

Town procurement/grant administrator and the Building department are reviewing the potential for creating public charging stations. While there is money for installation, the issue is the cost to the town in terms of ongoing maintenance and software subscription. They will be investigating how other towns have handled the additional cost.

Charger situation – issue of cost to town about maintenance and software subscription and point of sell – gone to other towns to see what they pay.

8. Meeting Agenda for February 22, 2024

1. Review of minutes from 1-11-2024
2. Residents' Items
3. Meet the Graphic Designer
4. Review the revise CAP and approve.
5. New Business (if time allowed)
6. Adjourn

9. Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.