

## Select Board's Climate Action Committee

May 24, 2021 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Werner Lohe opened the meeting explained how the meeting would move along and if anyone would like to speak to please raise your hand physically, or use the raise hand function.

He reminded everyone that this meeting was being recorded.

We have minutes from both March 22, 2021 and April 14, 2021 Were unanimously approved as submitted.

Werner Lohe asked the Board members to introduce themselves and give a bit of a background about themselves.

Thomas Barrasso introduced himself to the board he gave some background information about himself And his last position before at the city of Amesbury.

Thomas also noted that nothing really functions without you folks and being able to rely on that kind of brain power is going to be a tremendous Asset so we just need to figure out how to kind of focus all that I've been all over the place.

primarily focused with EPA for the longest time, and I had a short stint with EPA Region one, and I've been in IT UP A consultant for many, many years cleaning up other people's messes.

Of municipal buildings. The green communities' municipal vulnerability preparing us. So I think there's a lot of intersections. They are the things that you've already worked on.

You guys are definitely way ahead of stuff that I was doing in Boston back

David Lescohier; stated that been hanging out for this town is are covered landfill, which is begging to be covered with solar least in my opinion, and until now it's been PPA, and I'm wondering if we could work it around with the Town administrator to actually put the money up for that so that the town gets a full benefit and were able to retire the RX just not really expecting an answer, but just to put that on your agenda. Town has already passed and established an Overlay District have to get the numbers together to implement it.

David A. Pearlman asked Thomas about his thoughts on converting underutilized commercial space or black top areas and parking lots. new construction, because I've found that often there is a little bit of attention subtle between developments and preservation of open space and I personally have often wondered Why that tension should even exist if we have areas are already paved or other areas that are underutilized that are in transit rich locations that could be better utilized

Thomas Barrasso

I think I've seen that pretty much everywhere residents want things to go one way or another on the economic development front

Environmental issues across all variances. Spoke of Needing to apply for grant money.

Werner Lohe

Asked Tom to bring the Board up to speed on the PACE Program If you see where it stands right now and think about whether this might be something that we should be thinking about in the future.

Thomas Barrasso

For so pay stands for property assistant clean energy paste it was started in other parts of the country, can't remember who kicked it off. First, it might have been the Washington DC area.

So it's been out there for at least I'm going to see slightly under 10 so probably like around eight years.

And it is a phenomenal program that is essentially like a better. So if you understand how betterments would work. Say for example four betterments it's exactly the same.

You need the state to sort of come forth and sort of put the legislation in place that says this is now a mechanism that we can use.

You need the need someone to govern that and that in this case for Massachusetts. Massachusetts development organization which is quasi state.

They need it down at the municipal level where because it is a better man. So the treasure and the assessor all have to be on board.

sort of handle that. So the state started working on it. Several years ago and Amesbury and myself and warmer economic director of Amesbury were instrumental on sort of getting that plan rolled out a hit a major

Sort of wall in the legislature something when really Romney internally. And so the program did not get rolled out in a timely manner.

And he was very didn't lose interest but we kind of like everybody else is kind of like, forgot about it for a while, too. Okay, come back when you have something rolling

I was actually in the audience at a convention for utilities and I have pointed out by windy O'Malley who's in charge of pace at Mass development.

And like, yes, we'll be rolling this out in Amesbury, and that was two years ago.

So I've reconnected with Wendy and we've got a meeting, I believe, on Wednesday of this week. So I'm going to find out precisely where things are in the next part of its been nobody wants to be first, and a lot of ways. I like to be first.

There's, you know, you want to be the guy who steps off the lunar lander and puts his footprint in the room.

Don't do this. We don't know how it works well precisely rewriting the rule book as we move forward. So yeah, I want to be there on the cutting edge of that.

Where it's gotten rolled out yet I still don't know. I think they were looking for a big splash. So I think they were looking for, like, a Worcester or Boston but Brookline would be perfect place to sort of do this

and it not only covers Solar rooftop solar, but it also covers all the infrastructure that goes with it. So he pumps your systems in the control things. So it's all energy efficiency.

Or energy conservation measures the CMS. So it would be an ideal candidate to use now.

When we were dealing with it in Amesbury I was focused on the commercial, industrial, because that was going to be that sort of path of least resistance.

Oftentimes when you try to get into the individual homeowner resident level.

Things go a little bit more sluggish because there's a lot more hurdles to go through and the volume would figure would roll into your taxes. That's exactly how this would work too. So you want to do rooftop solar. You want to do other energy conversions in your house, you want to move to heat pumps.

Which is why the assessor treasures. So it was almost ready to roll out. It's closer than it was. But I think it's, it's a great solution. Some of these problems where especially where people can't afford

Alan Leviton

Couple of things on the pace and its connection with Brookline, as I recall, unless it's changed eligible properties. I'm just looking at what I have includes qualifying commercial or industrial properties as well as multifamily buildings with five or more units so

Or condominiums and I think one of the things that is going to need some clarification is how this would work with condominiums, with regard to approval by mortgage holders where you've got multiple mortgage. We, one of the things I think one of the first things I would like to see us do is actually see how does it apply specifically to the properties in Brookline, because this is not, this is not for single family homes.

Alan Leviton

I'm not sure that would be anything that would apply to our condo. I mean, basically the PACE program is a way to get alone. And you can see if you have a single family home or if you own.

As an individual or an entity own ability.

Having a better man could be a good thing to do because then, and then it moves on with the building it a condominium, you've got

The law applies to five units or more so chances are, in most things you're going to have a minimum of five owners up to in in the property. I'm in probably 150 owners. So it's it. I think we need to get some clarification, even before we have their and

There technical aspects. Also, when you and I talk time. I mentioned that

I had spoken with somebody from doer about this. And one of the one of the requirements. Is that basically the

Thomas Barrasso

Yeah, that was one of the stumbling blocks, even for commercial properties was finding that entity that actually could do that analysis in a way that was acceptable to the state.

Werner Lohe

Enough of a lift to start with a big rental building or commercial building seems to me the big question is how do we find out how do we, because they those people technical risk adverse. And I think you had a question or comment and Mike

**Linda Pehlke**

Asked about how this would be financed, 0 percent loans? Does it come from Mass development? or Local banks?

Thomas Barrasso explained where the finance would come from.

Maiyim Baron

There's so much opportunity in Brookline. This is the most amazing little town to be involved with. So I think we can do great things here.

Werner Lohe

Discussion

About what think our long term expectations are, where we think things are going in general with climate action in Brookline and what our expectations are, of course

Michael Berger

We look at the connections to residential, Programs, like solar that made a big impact. Michael also spoke of Kathleen and mothers out front, and they have made a big impact in terms of the gas leaks.

Thomas Barrasso

Flexible teachers and teachers who go to the bat for some of these things, which is why I got involved in, you know, the no nukes and other things that were happening, you know, the 60s and the 70s were all due to those great teachers.

David A. Pearlman

I do know we have a keen interest in sustainability in our schools. We've had pilot programs with composting, for example, that were quite popular.

So I look forward to collaborating with you and if there are particular initiatives that you have in mind.

For the schools, I would be glad to hear about it and I can make sure that you have a voice at the School Committee.

To flow proposals and potential collaboration. I personally am the chair of the policy subcommittee. And sometimes we do take up environmentally related agenda items such as use of pesticides on school properties food sustainability. So there should be a lot of opportunities

Werner Lohe

we've always had great support from the School Committee and teachers and so on.

The problem is time and resources

Deborah Rivers

Senator Mike Barrett, who was one of the major sponsors of the new Massachusetts climate legislation.

Spoke to the Massachusetts AIA about the legislation and he gave a breakdown for Massachusetts emissions and I don't know how Brookline stacks up against it but transportation was 41.9% almost 42%

Residential and commercial buildings combined are only about 27% electricity generation 18.6% industry 5.2% and other 6.9% of which agriculture is only about 0.3 %, I always thought the buildings were the big thing. But I think that we really do need to focus on transportation. The other thing I learned is that Governor Baker didn't want that, but they got it in there and the code will actually include a net zero definition.

So I think we should be examining that because I think when we can fit in with something that's already being developed and adopted.

It makes more sense than trying to develop it on our own. And the other thing that he said I'm going to more points transportation is not really adequately covered by this legislation at this point. So I think that's an interesting

Thomas Barrasso

Before I took the job and I reached out to surrounding communities. I know a bunch of people over in Arlington, and I chatted with them last week and

We were sitting around trying to think of ways because they're trying to do similar things to what Brookline was doing with your fossil fuel sort of band. They're doing a slightly different way. And my suggestion to them was like, hey, Governor Baker just signed this new legislation.

Can we sort of go together and go to these meetings as an ensemble and their answer was, through the Metropolitan Area planning Commission?

There's some group said that I've already got on their email list and had conversation this afternoon.

Then there's the unusual things like electromagnetic radiation.

The interconnection costs are staggering and the review process is as slow as molasses in winter. So all of those things sort of need to get broken down and reformulated so that we can move forward in order to hit those timelines that everybody wants to hit. So there's definitely a lot of work to do a lot of cross collaboration that needs to happen.

Don Weitzman

Asked Thomas Barrasso questions regarding the Collins report.

There are three that I would like to get your reaction to

The first is the call for developing a strategic plan.

Which may be the most important Plans. But, you know, they basically been laundry lists. They haven't been good at a strategic plan and

The, the fate of working groups. This has been a very powerful tool that came out of the climate summit, there are people here like John Harris, who was very much involved with them and

I mean, it really is a mechanism for involving the public in very important ways. So how do you see the future of those. And finally, the internal senior working team, which sounds to me like a very powerful mechanism for Town government to be cohesively behind a sustainability agenda. So any thoughts on how to move forward on those

Thomas Barrasso

Definitely the strategic plan. I think needs Small simple maybe a one pager and definitely focused action items. I think we need to hit a lot of things that we can actually accomplish in a much shorter amount of time.

Kathleen Scanlon

Communities to approach National Grid Nancy Heller was leading that effort, along with Mel Kleckner and they offered a letter together. So there is some history there of our involvement, but they were kind of stonewalled by national grid.

And had written a very, you know, forceful letter to get some changes for

All communities who are encountering the same frustrations and working with national grid in particular.

So I'm not really sure where that is. But I'd love to see more work like that. Done.

Kind of along the lines of what Michael was saying one idea that I've heard recently that I just want to bring up

Being part of mothers out front and in various initiatives, I do hear a lot from people in the community.

About like the need for resources and the need to understand how to access what is available for instance at the state level for incentives and things like that. And the idea of an energy coach surfaced recently.

Werner Lohe

Spoke of Working teams, Electric Vehicles. And try to have some synergy around issues to get other Towns involved.

Thomas Barrasso

Yeah, that's come up a couple of times and one nice thing is that that all of us in the sort of the green community realm and the NDP realm are kind of all interconnected.

Again I stepped out a little bit to go back into the private sector, but you know, I'm back, and everybody's still seems to be where they were, they were when I left.

So we will sort of reconnected. So most of that funnel through do we are. And the main contact for do we are for Amesbury was Neil Duffy and John Seta and so they know me really well in the same context down. They have so they would be at least once a month when we would all get together. So I'm assuming that of the post.

Kobe, we'd be able to sort of start that up again in that exchange of ideas like the energy codes are things that we're doing, you know, in Brookline, or wherever always come up. So definitely a collaboration between all these different

Linda Pehlke

We do have a complete streets policy in town. But I think we are suffering, like a lot of other departments with lack of resources and staffing. It gets bottlenecked, because they can't staff can't process them all and work on them and do designs and Strategic Plan is very critical

transportation piece of the greenhouse gas inventory

Michael Berger

Asked questions on how Thomas could work with the committee and how the committee could help him.

Maybe, maybe part of that and maybe sort of like, you know, break this gab into a smaller entities that are a little bit more focused on these bite sized portions

But I think, again, that strategic plan me and for that and figure out where we can put them focus where it's going to do the most good in the shortest amount of time.

Ralph Child

Thank you wearing or. My name is Ralph Child and so that I'm just not a lurker on this call and we just take a couple minutes to explain why I'm on this call.

I've lived in Brookline since 2010 and a more than five unit condominium. It's one of the old Victorian it was converted to condominiums in Brookline Village and we have six units.

I am a very recently retired lawyer. I spent my career, mostly with big firm downtown mostly doing environmental regulatory work.

Much better utilities. A lot of it like Tom cleaning up old industrial sites from the perspective of being the lawyer lot of manufacture gas plant sites and I see that even though you don't know what bricklaying as a couple of those right in my neighborhood.

also spent time I was an assistant US attorney would go wild was the US attorney and filed a big super fun case and the Boston Harbor cleanup case.

Back in the 80s and then in the in the 90s. I spent four years at General Counsel of mass DP, but for last 20 years I was one of the big firm downtown and mostly getting permits in many cases for projects you wouldn't like but that's behind me now and I still follow what the phases of the project is and mothers out front and others didn't like some of those projects, but that's the way time to get up to speed on

Municipal things- I'm unbelievably pleased to hear all of the background on this and would like to get involved.

Came to this meeting, not really knowing what it was going to be. But unbelievably pleased to have heard all of your

Backgrounds, and the work you've all been doing for a very long time as local activists and Tom I know many people with your rough resume. We work together. I worked a lot with Bob Barney, who is the name he forgot before Berwick and others.

On various things. So I'm here and I'm going to figure out some way to get involved. Now that I have the time. Thank you.

Werner Lohe

Absolutely. Thank you very much for coming. I always think that retired people are a great resource, particularly for work, we're trying to do. And, you know, we've done quite a bit. Werner Lohe

But I think this was a great start in that regard. You know, there are these issues with substantive things we work on how do we organize ourselves. How do we best use our time at these meetings?

It's really important to think about to get a sense from all of us from you all about how we should be using our time, particularly on our next meeting.

Linda Pehlke

Are we getting the select board chair?

Werner Lohe

We are, but we don't know.

Werner Lohe

Thank you. We're adjourned. Thank you very