

DRAFT Minutes

MVC Climate Action Task Force

Friday, April 2nd, 2021

Zoom

CATF members present: Ben Robinson (BR), Kate Warner (KW), Alan Strahler (AS), Tristan Israel (TI), Rob Hannemann (RH), Cheryl Doble (CD), Beckie Finn (BF), Kathy Newman (KN), Noli Taylor (NT), Joan Malkin (JM), Bob Johnston (BJ), Richard Toole (RT), Liz Durkee (LD), Alan Strahler (AS), Dan Doyle (DD), Erik Peckar (EP), Richard Andre (RA)

Others in Attendance: Susan Wasserman (SW)

I. Discuss new MA climate change legislation

BR: There is a 50% collective target reduction by 2030, along with target sub limits placed on different sectors: Electricity, Transportation, Commercial, Industrial Processing, and Natural Gas, amongst a few others. Reductions in certain sectors will have the ability to offset shortfalls in others.

Language in the bill related to Environmental Justice and the Stretch Code will be relevant to MV. The bill emphasizes energy efficiency but falls short of focusing on energy sources which heat and cool buildings.

There are different renewable energy strategies that will impact the public utilities. Secretary Theoharides and her Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs will be tasked with promulgating rules to achieve the climate roadmap goals; CATF needs to be on the radar of her office and understand how rules will be crafted and sizeable targets approached.

Federal Legislation

BR: Biden's Federal Jobs Plan – the proposed ~\$2.65 trillion over ten years is a good start but closer to \$10 million will be needed to pull off a full transition away from fossil fuels. The natural gas industry is pushing to be included in permitted fuel sectors given it encompasses a number of fuels that can potentially be integrated with natural gas (ie. liquefied natural gas, hydrogen, etc). It's unclear how areas comparable to MV, which lack natural gas infrastructure, will be accounted for in such a plan.

EP: Seven offshore wind projects totaling 5600 MW projects are expected - enough to power 2.8 million homes or 42% of the Commonwealth's electric demand.

BR: Given public charging infrastructure is not nearly as essential on the Vineyard, could part of the Climate Roadmap Plan transition be a home charging infrastructure program where funds would become available to homeowners who might not otherwise be able to afford them?

AS: We will need some amount of public charging options, knowing tourists will want to leave the island with a full tank/charge; perhaps some EV charging stations or options could be part of SSA's business model as folks wait to board a ferry or endure stand by lines.

EP: Cape Light Compact procures our renewable supply; target now is 40% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030; after that, we further ratchet down by 1% / year after that.

JM: We are presently at 17% renewable supply.

RH: A truer accounting will show that our electricity supply is presently above 20% renewable; our 2030 reality will actually show renewables at more like 50-60%; the 2040 numbers of 100% will be harder to achieve. Three of the four towns will vote on the 100% renewable resolution. Oak Bluffs will vote to become a Green Community this year and weigh in on the 100% renewable resolution in a following year.

JM: The 100% renewable is an indicator of values on the island.

II. MV Museum – One Island, Many Stories, speaker series

Some of the different themes of this series sponsored by the MV Museum are as follows:

Tourism - guest speaker: Nancy Gardella
Climate Adaptation – guest speaker: Liz Durkee (4/15 at 4 pm)
Farming – guest speaker: Noli Taylor (November)
Voyaging
Fishing

BJ requested the audio from Liz' session be posted on MVC website.

LD will also be talking to 8th grade teachers on climate. TikTok videos might be a good medium to reach middle school target audience; BF added that perhaps a 9th grade intern could be enlisted to assist. The Tribal Climate Science Center is a good resource for content. Asha Asmani, who is working on a Herring Run project with the Tribe just moved to the island and is a wealth of information; NT added that The Alliance for Climate Education has great content for climate education as well.

BJ informed that his wife teaches 7th and 8th graders at Montessori School and they would be happy to become involved in writing such a curriculum.

Baker and Theorides attempted an increase for MVP programs in the form of a transfer tax, but that proposal didn't make it out of C'tee.

III. Subcommittee reports – Education, Funding, Political Outreach

Education

JM: the c'tee is proceeding with Climate Week; A broad invitation is being issued for all forms of participation in this week long event; the week is intended to show what the island will look like in 2040; Chris Fisher will talk to Amy Schumer to be a possible speaker; Obama is still being pursued to speak with children; info sessions will be included as well for potential participants as an idea provoking forum.

Funding

KW: The two primary avenues being explored as potential funding sources that CATF might leverage are: MV Community Foundation and/or Vineyard Wind Community Based Agreement (CBA).

RA: Presently, the funds that would become available through the CBA are for projects that exclusively focus on mitigation – otherwise known as Type III (Energy Resiliency) projects; Adaptation should be another alternative; Governance of funding allocation will need to be figured out as well; VSEC voted to take on the governance roles at the request of VP; they could effectively serve as the Advisory C'tee for the Energy Resiliency Fund.

BR: Do the BOS' need to authorize that power if VSEC is charged with allocation of funds to specific projects.

KW: counsel will advise on how to codify such empowerment.

VP Will meet again on Monday April 12th.

Political Outreach

BR met with Natasha Silva, Keating's Legislative Director, to discuss the Congressman's support of biomass in western MA; riders are attached to budgets that allow this sector to contribute toward Renewable Portfolio Standard targets.

DD updated that the c'tee has met with all three federal elects most relevant to MV: Sen. Warren (Hannah Benson Regional Director for Cape, Islands, and South Shore), Sen. Markey (Nolan O'Brien Regional Director for Cape, Islands, and South Shore), and Congressman Keating (Andrew Nelson). A standing meeting will take place with Nolan O'Brien.

IV. Vineyard Energy Project

Susan Wasserman was introduced and she then explained her involvement with the Vineyard Energy Project (VEP) and some of their history; VEP was est. in 2003; a lot of their focus was centered on Vineyard Power; they were also involved in the Island Plan; the Energy Task Force was really well equipped in the Island Plan; VEP has not been as active in the recent year with Covid.

Susan is working to figure out how VEP could fit into the bigger picture of energy transformation across the island; SW wants to be supportive, and not duplicative; VEP reps are trying to get a good handle on initiatives happening today as they relate to the island.

AS suggested that VEP might support an energy ombudsman or energy coach office as a clearinghouse for energy information and savings.