

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE
Committee on Sustainability and Transportation
Councilor Andrew Zarro (D4), Chair
Councilor Victoria Pelletier (D2)
Councilor Roberto Rodríguez (At-Large)

Minutes November 30, 2022

Members Present: Councilor Zarro, Councilor Pelletier

Staff Present: Troy Moon, Erin Ferrell

Guests: William Needelman (Waterfront Coordinator), Stephanie Watson (Governor's Energy Office), Matthew Burns (Maine Port Authority)

Meeting called to order.

October 12 Minutes

Councilor Zarro makes a motion to approve the October 12th meeting minutes. Councilor Pelletier moves the motion. October 12th minutes passed unanimously, 2-0.

Sustainability Update

Presented by Troy Moon and Erin Ferrell

The Sustainability Office wants to thank the Council again for appropriating \$200,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds to support Electrify Everything! Programming. The Sustainability Office plans to launch Electrify Everything! 2.0 in early 2023. The Office was awarded a Maine DEP Waste Diversion grant to expand access to our food scrap recycling drop sites. The Office also hosted a Pumpkin Cycle community event to prevent pumpkins and jack-o-lanterns to be recycled and not wasted. The event was a great success with 3,000 lbs of pumpkins collected and recycled. The first Level 2 EVGo chargers were installed at East End School and construction of the Level 2 charging hub in the Deering Oaks parking lot is nearly completed. We hope both will be operating before the end of the year. Troy spoke at the Maine Digital Government Summit in Augusta to discuss how the City has employed “smart city” technologies including LED street lights and adaptive traffic control systems to help achieve our sustainability goals. The office also hosted a webinar with speakers from Efficiency Maine and Evergreen Home Performance to discuss home energy efficiency improvements that residents can make to save money on heating costs. The One Climate Future team hosted two Coffee and Climate events, one focused on Community Solar with guests from ReVision Energy and Maine Community Solar.

Committee Comment on Sustainability Update

Councilor Pelletier asked how many pumpkins were collected.

We do not have a count for how many it was, but it was a great success. Councilor Pelletier shares her congratulations to the Committee acknowledging that the Committee is so busy and has some really great work happening.

Councilor Zarro adds that the appropriation of \$200,000 in Recovery Act funds to support Electrify Everything! Programming is a great achievement for the Committee in amplifying the Sustainability Office's One Climate Future efforts and for making equitable progress for low- and moderate-income Portland-ers.

Presentation regarding Portland's potential role in offshore wind development

Presented by William Needelman (Waterfront Coordinator), Stephanie Watson (Governor's Energy Office), Matthew Burns (Maine Port Authority)

The S&T Committee received presentations from two State of Maine offices working on the development of offshore wind energy generation in the Gulf of Maine. Stephanie Watson serves as the Maine Offshore Wind Program Manager in the Governor's Energy Office. Matthew Burns is the Executive Director of the Maine Port Authority. Ms. Watson and Mr. Burns have both been assisting with the leadership of the Maine Offshore Wind Roadmap program.

The presentation included a report by Ms. Watson on the Maine Offshore Wind Roadmap process, followed by a description of findings by Mr. Burns related to ports and infrastructure development. City staff requests that the Committee receive a briefing on the status of wind energy in the Gulf of Maine to understand potential opportunities for the Port of Portland, including City infrastructure, in support of offshore blue energy development.

Comment on the Presentations

Bill Needelman notes that the industry has reached out to the City of Portland and we do have capacity at the Maine State Pier and the Ocean Terminal, although it may be well in advance of investments may be made, it's not too early to start talking about this and planning for it so that we all can be prepared as decision-makers. Matthew Burns agrees and thinks it may be wise to explore what facilities may be developable to support the offshore wind industry.

Councilor Zarro asks if the construction/support plan for offshore wind in Maine will fall within the timeframe of the needs of Maine Won't Wait / One Climate Future. Is it an ambitious timeline?

Matthew Burns responds that it all depends on the ports, and if there is no port facility constructed to support a Gulf of Maine offshore wind development then it will happen competitively out of state.

Bill Needelman adds that our partners at UMaine or the Roux Institute want to be in Portland. Access to the Jetport, highway system, workforce, and education all makes us very attractive for support and compatibility for a port facility.

Annual report on Energy Benchmarking

Presented by Troy Moon and Erin Ferrell

The City of Portland adopted an energy benchmarking ordinance that requires covered properties to annually report water and energy usage. Energy Benchmarking helps us encourage the efficient use of energy and water and help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By taking inventory of energy usage each year and comparing buildings of similar size and use,

owners can identify underperforming areas that can be improved. All owners of buildings 20,000 sq ft or more in the City of Portland received a notice letter in January 2022. As the ordinance states, multi-tenant buildings 20,000 square feet or more are required to report energy and water use metrics once the utility is able to provide whole-building energy usage data in a convenient online format. Central Maine Power is currently working on this platform, with hopes to launch by the end of 2022. The Sustainability Office anticipates that multi-tenant buildings will be required to report starting in 2024.

The Sustainability Office received 191 Energy and Water Use Benchmarking Reports for calendar year 2021. There were 50 municipal buildings and 141 commercial/residential buildings reported. Of the commercial/residential buildings, 96 reported enough energy and water data to designate Building Energy Use Intensity for the buildings.

There are around 600 buildings covered under the ordinance in the City of Portland. The Office has had difficulty reaching the building owners of these buildings as Assessor's Office information is the basis for benchmarking contact. In early 2022, the Office requested contact information for building owners and those who would be responsible for completing the reporting required. The Office received contact information for 311 covered buildings (52%).

Comment on the Presentation

Councilor Zarro asks about the typical/major response of property owners. *Erin describes conversations about the goals of the ordinance (reduce energy usage, save money).*

Councilor Zarro asks if there is a way the municipality can implement mandatory documentation or onboarding anytime there is a sale of a commercial building? *Troy is interested in broaching this conversation with property-owners and their energy managers.* Is there an enforcement mechanism for building owners who choose not to report? *There is a fine that can be implemented (\$20 / day after the ordinance due date) but it would be difficult to enforce at the moment. This information is included in the letter received by property owners.*

Councilor Pellitier celebrates the dramatic increase in the number of annual reports filed and appreciation for the time management of onboarding these property owners.

Report on Electrify Everything! pilot program

Presented by Troy Moon

In March 2022, the Sustainability Office launched Electrify Everything! with the goal of assisting in at least 75 electrification projects to help Portland residents decarbonize their homes and lower their energy costs. The Office chose ReVision Energy as a partner, through the RFP process, that would be able to provide a discount to Electrify Everything! participants to help decrease the cost of installing rooftop solar, heat pumps, water heater heat pumps, and electric vehicle chargers.

114 Portland residents expressed interest in the program by signing up on the Sustainability Office website or by going directly to ReVision Energy. There were a total of 105 projects

confirmed for Electrify Everything! participants. Projects included: 33 air source heat pumps, 2 battery storage units, 10 water heater heat pumps, 5 home electric vehicle charging stations, 33 community solar farm leases, and 22 solar (pv) installations. The Office asked residents who signed up for the program to provide feedback about their experience and also requested feedback from 206 efficiency contractor companies in the Greater Portland area to learn about barriers they may face in acquiring customers and/or completing installations. Their feedback will inform our efforts in promoting beneficial electrification throughout the community and will help us design future versions of Electrify Everything!

Comment on the Presentation

Councilor Zarro and Councilor Pelletier share excitement for this program in this past year and for next year with ARPA funds.

Review committee accomplishments during 2022

Presenters: Committee members and City staff

Troy Moon highlights that the Committee received a grant to hire a consultant to help develop Climate Resilience Overlay Zoning and a grant to support climate action work in neighborhoods. The Committee spent a considerable amount of time working on efforts to promote beneficial electrification, which is a core strategy to achieve the climate goals described in One Climate Future. This includes programs for homeowners, engagement related to the electrification of cruise ship berths, and engagement with Central Maine Power / Avangrid to emphasize the City's commitment to beneficial electrification of buildings and transportation. The Committee met with representatives from GPCOG to review and discuss GPCOG's Rapid Transit Study, plans by the Maine Turnpike Authority to create a highway spur between South Portland and Gorham, and regional transportation plans adopted by GPCOG/PACTS. The Committee adopted amendments to Chapter 34 of the City Code to generally prohibit the use of synthetic fertilizers and restrict the use of organic fertilizers. Also, the Sustainability Office now has three full-time employees - which has doubled its capacity.

Discussion of items to recommend for committee to consider in 2023

Presenters: Committee members and City staff

Councilor Zarro mentions items including the State/High Street assessment (progress on the Complete Streets plan), Franklin Street restructuring, car-sharing, Electrify Everything!, the purple trash bag program, parking, etc. The Committee is working to set the agenda to share to the public.

Other Business

Councilor Zarro asks for any other questions or comments and thanks the guests for joining us.

Motion to Adjournment

Moved by Councilor Pelletier, friendly adjournment.

Meeting Adjourned