

**Climate Change Council  
Minutes  
January 28, 2021, 7:00 pm**

The meeting was held remotely and was recorded on GoToMeeting and is available for viewing on Pepperell Community Media.

**Members present:** Bob Cataldo (arrived 7:30), Renee D'Argento, Susan Edwards, Beth Faxon, Ken Hartlage, James Scarsdale, Jason Veysey, Jessica Veysey-Powell, Chuck Walkovich.

**Absences:** none

**Guests:** Tony Beattie, Deb Fountain, Paula Terrasi

Chair Hartlage convened the meeting and began by asking the newest member, Renee D'Argento, to introduce herself.

Renee D'Argento provided some information on her background professionally and in-town.

The minutes from 12 January 2021 were reviewed.

Motion to accept the minutes from 12 January 2021: Chuck Walkovich; seconded: Jason Veysey; Vote in favor: 8-0, with Renee D'Argento abstaining.

Then, Chair Hartlage provided a review of key documents relevant to the Council's mission, scope of work, potential strategies, and potential projects. Specifically, he reviewed the Massachusetts (MA) 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap, the MA Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2030, the Pepperell Master Plan (as relevant to the Council), and the "Sustainable Pepperell" report. He highlighted the portions of the MA documents that he thought most relevant to Pepperell. Brief discussions followed. The following comments were among those raised:

Jason Veysey pointed out that the MA state goal to enact a "stretch" high-performance building code would require passive-house building envelopes (i.e., houses would have no heating inputs) and that this would be a sea-change in the building code realm. He felt Pepperell should seize this idea, when and if allowed via the state.

Renee D'Argento would like us to prioritize Green Municipal Aggregation, which she feels is the low hanging fruit with the broadest impact to both lowering our carbon footprint and reducing energy costs for all residents and businesses. Additionally, she wanted to make sure that any push for energy efficiency and low-carbon home heating include funds for both low and *mid*-income households.

Jason Veysey pointed out that the state's goals and proposed strategies are massively out-of-step with regard to making low-carbon heating systems affordable. Perhaps Pepperell's best strategy here will be educating the public about incentives.

Tony Beattie highlighted the Healthy Soils Bills that is currently proposed in MA and might be helpful for Pepperell. He is also trying to form a second committee to deal solely with the Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) in Pepperell. If a second committee is not possible, will the Council undertake the MVP work?

Robert Cataldo was interested to learn more about this, as he is concerned about increased flooding from Pepperell's rivers, due to climate change.

With regard to the Council's scope of work: there was much discussion about how to prioritize actions and goals.

Susan Edwards wanted to make sure that affordability and equity be included in our goals.

James Scarsdale suggested that getting a charging station in town would be a good project that could enhance the feasibility of owning electric vehicles for low and middle income citizens.

Jason Veysey wanted to make sure that the Council's:

- Time horizon extends through 2050;
- Scope includes examining relevant zoning and land-use issues (potentially to include: composting, waste reduction, recycling, wastewater treatment); and
- Work includes calculating the town's carbon footprint.

Tony Beattie reminded the Council to consider its "signature project," which might include solar panels on the landfill or addressing how to improve carbon capture in lawns.

Jason Veysey mentioned that the idea of an electric-vehicle charging station could be a good signature project. Paula Terrasi said there might be grants available for this through the Green Communities program.

Renee D'Argento wanted the Council to consider both economic and natural resource benefits from any of our work. She also asked that the Council consider addressing the benefits of trees to air quality in the urbanized portions of town.

Chair Hartlage then asked whether any additional business needed to be discussed.

Jason Veysey wanted to revisit the manner in which the clerk was selected at the 12 January 2021 meeting. He felt that there was an implicit assumption that a female would be the minute-taker and referenced research showing that women are disproportionately assigned such housekeeping duties during meetings.

James Scarsdale repeated his suggestion from the previous meeting that note-taking rotate among members and additional discussion ensued.

Amended motion to rotate note-taking responsibilities among Council members, on a volunteer basis and excluding the chair: James Scarsdale; seconded: Beth Faxon; Voted in favor: 9-0.

Chair Hartlage then opened the meeting for public comment. Paula Terrasi pointed out that meeting minutes are usually recorded, which is helpful for minute preparation.

Next Meeting: 7 pm, Thursday, 11 February 2021.

Motion to adjourn: James Scarsdale; seconded by Robert Cataldo. Voted 9-0 to adjourn at 8:46 pm.