

Town of Milton
Climate Action Planning (CAP) Committee
August 17th, 2023

Meeting Date: 8/17/23

Members in Attendance: Tracy Dyke-Redmond, co-Chair; Alex Hasha, co-Chair and Secretary; Lisa Troy; Maggie Oldfield; Arthur Doyle; Jack Turner, Environmental Coordinator; Mary Stefanidakis;

Members attending remotely: Ron Israel (zoom)

Members Absent: John Godleski;

Meeting Location: Town Hall, Carol A. Blute conference room

Time Meeting called to Order: 6:03PM

Time Meeting Adjourned: 7:25PM

Co-chair Tracy Dyke-Redmond called the meeting to order at 6:12PM.

1. Welcome

2. Approve Meeting Minutes

No corrections were offered to the draft minutes.

Maggie Oldfield moved to approve the minutes for the 7/20/23 committee meeting. Lisa Troy seconded the motion.

Votes:

- Tracy Dyke-Redmond: yes
- Alex Hasha: yes
- Lisa Troy: yes
- Maggie Oldfield: yes
- Arthur Doyle: yes
- Mary Stefanidakis: yes
- Ron Israel: yes

3. Comments/Reactions to the article from Mark Dullea on Climate Leadership among Boston metro towns

Doyle: Mark Dullea is former Milton resident, and a senior planner across several communities including Cambridge. He has set up a website <https://www.climateplanning.city>. It is a treasure trove of information relevant to our work. The article distributed was an unabridged draft of an article he submitted for publication in Boston Magazine.

Dyke-Redmond: This article is a great example of the large quantity of resources that are available out there, and it makes sense for us to build on work that others have done.

Stefanidakis: It's useful how the article lays out a broad strategy. For Milton specifically, funding is a key consideration for where we focus first, and what needs to be a longer term plan.

Dyke-Redmond: Are there other questions we would want to ask Mr. Dullea if we invited him to speak with us.

Stefanidakis: How will we benchmark ourselves in terms of emissions data?

Hasha: Data identification and gathering should be a topic specifically addressed in the plan itself. Many of the data sources we would need aren't readily available yet, and may need to be created.

Doyle: We could request his advice on appropriate metrics to track and how to lay out a reasonable time table that is neither too ambitious nor too slow.

4. Discuss work plan and proposed revisions

Dyke-Redmond: Our intent is to spend the bulk of this meeting discussing the proposed work plans laying out objectives and a broad timeline for our work.

Two options were shared with the committee, one being a condensed version that results in a plan a little sooner. The first proposal leads to a final plan in March of 2025. It includes elements of research, public outreach and engagement, prioritization, as discussed previously. The second proposal accelerates the timeline a little bit, including all the same elements but producing a draft plan earlier in the process.

Troy: I like the idea of subcommittees for breaking up the research effort.

Hasha: I agree with breaking up the work into smaller groups, but having formal subcommittees may impede our ability to work together informally to gather information. If 2-3 members are focusing on researching a particular area, they can share information about that topic informally without violating the open meeting law because that group is not a quorum. If we form a subcommittee, they would not be able to communicate without a public meeting.

Doyle: The two major pillars of the outline are mitigation (emissions reductions) and adaptation (managing risks from the climate change that is already occurring).

Hasha: Topical areas like land conservation, energy supply, etc will have elements that span both mitigation and adaptation.

Dyke-Redmond: Putting these plans together, because we don't have a budget allocated, I assumed we will be doing a lot of the research and plan writing ourselves. Looking at the large number of topics we'll need to cover, there are about as

many topics as committee members. Do we want to work on them alone or in groups, knowing that to work in groups we may need to participate in multiple groups?

Israel: recommended that the work plan document should include the goals and objectives from the charge for reference.

Doyle: Two considerations regarding funding: what are the committee's funding needs for help completing its work. Second, what funding is needed for the actions recommended by the plan? It would be useful to find out from other towns what actions they have successfully prioritized for funding.

Troy: Can we identify key research questions in each topic area?

Oldfield: Perhaps we can break up the work by town, with each of us reviewing a town's plan and contacting them. I'm concerned that we will be unlikely to be prioritized for any funding requests, at least this year, based on the financial condition of the town. Can we tap into the skills of Milton residents?

Doyle: We should also investigate whether any actions are being taken through partnership between towns or at the county level.

Israel: Would like to see us move forward with a data-based approach.

Hasha: The town has received an updated GHG inventory from Apex that we will review as a committee in an upcoming meeting soon.

Troy: Topics that interest me as a representative of the school committee are buildings, transportation, and solid waste. Also interested in adaptation / resilience.

Doyle is agnostic as to which topic he would want to focus on.

Ron Israel is interested in focusing on forestry and green space (conservation)

Troy: We can organize our research in a large table, with topic areas down one side and the columns would be kinds of information, for example: town bylaws, resources, etc.

Hasha: I'm interested in Energy and Buildings and Adaptation.

Dyke-Redmond: It sounds like we're heading down the path of the streamlined work plan, where we begin with focused research, then proceed to public engagement and feedback gathering, then revision, and finalization.

Oldfield: Public engagement is the most important piece and it is difficult to do well. Recommend connecting with neighborhood associations to spread the word about our proposals.

Dyke-Redmond: In the streamlined work plan, I had us wrapping up initial research in January, and doing public outreach between January and April. I think that's too fast, honestly. The public engagement part is more important than the written document, in

the end. That's how we educate our opinion, get buy-in, and get the community involved in executing the plan.

Hasha: To me, that emphasizes the importance of getting to a shareable draft quickly, because if we spend a year writing a first draft, we're just delaying the real work of engaging the community.

Israel: Engagement should be an ongoing process, and use multiple channels like newsletters.

Jack Taylor: We will be posting [a resiliency page](#) on the town website soon (editorial note: it's up now!)

Doyle: The town master plan will be revised and restructured over the next 15 months or so. We should be engaged with the MPIC to ensure we coordinate with them.

Dyke-Redmond: It sounds like one of the elements of our research will be engaging with other town committees and stakeholders to learn from them. How should we decide who to invite to come speak to us in a public meeting, versus reaching out to them individually outside of our public meetings?

Stakeholders discussed included the management of the Blue Hills, the shade tree advisory committee, and the Department of Public Works.

For the next meeting, the chairs will revise the work plan and set up a table structure for us to collect research resources, key questions, proposed action items, etc for discussion at future meetings.

5. Discuss how to gather information on town planning and budgeting schedule

Budget requests should be submitted by mid-October. Everything is finally approved at Town Meeting in May.

Stefanidakis: Is there a particular format required for submitting a budget request?

Dyke-Redmond: Are there particular types of help we expect we will need?

Hasha: Assistance with public outreach may be needed.

Dyke-Redmond: If budget requests are due by mid-October, that means we need to have specific proposals to discuss for our next meeting.

Various members discussed opportunities for volunteer help from college and high-school youth with an interest in sustainability.

Action item: Reach out to the Town Administrator's office to find out the appropriate format and necessary details for a budget request.

Oldfield: As an example, MPICs budget is only \$30k / year. So there is not a lot of funding to be had, and we need to be careful about what we request and how much.

Doyle: Anything that is sent to the Warrant committee must come from the Select Board.

Hasha: Is there a dollar threshold that triggers that level of process?

Doyle: I think it's \$10,000.

6. Announce upcoming meetings/events of interest, and/or resources identified by committee members

Doyle: The conservation commission has submitted a proposal for funding with respect to 25 acres of land that need to be preserved surrounding the Neponset river, adjacent to Pope John Paul park. The proposal to the community preservation committee was that that 25 acres was an important laboratory for monitoring and mitigating the impacts of climate change. I met with the executive director of the Neponset Watershed Association, Ian Cook, and discussed it with him and during that conversation he supported this notion and also indicated that they had the estuary as a priority in their work along with other aspects of the waterways in the town of Milton. There's a myriad of topics that relate to this. It's not just volume of water, but it's impact on flora and fauna, also the degree of salinity, possible changes in the temperature of the water. We have one of the largest smelt fish hatcheries in New England in the Neponset river just below the Baker Dam. We have the EPA superfund project 8.7 miles upstream which can impact Milton.

So far, we have been approved by the CPC to move forward with a proposal that's due on the 29th of August. Ian Cook indicated that if this committee wished, he would be willing to come in and speak with us about what the NWA's objectives are related to climate action initiatives.

A copy of the conservation commission's preliminary proposal to the community preservation committee was shared with the committee and is linked below.

Co-chair Tracy Dyke-Redmond invited a motion to send a letter of support for the CPA project proposal outlined by Arthur Doyle. The committee discussion acknowledged that we do not have sufficient information to compare the proposal to others that may be before the CPC. A letter of support should speak to the benefits of this proposal, but not its relative merit compared to others.

Maggie Oldfield moved to draft a letter of support for the CPA project. The motion was seconded by Lisa Troy.

Votes:

- Tracy Dyke-Redmond: yes
- Alex Hasha: yes
- Lisa Troy: yes
- Maggie Oldfield: yes

- Arthur Doyle: yes
- Mary Stefanidakis: yes
- Ron Israel: yes

Lisa Troy: We were talking about forest canopy. <https://www.mrlc.gov/> has all types of datasets. Tools to visualize and compare going back to ~2001

7. Public comments

No public comments were offered.

8. Adjourn

Arthur Doyle moved to adjourn. Lisa Troy seconded.

Votes:

- Tracy Dyke-Redmond: yes
- Alex Hasha: yes
- Lisa Troy: yes
- Maggie Oldfield: yes
- Arthur Doyle: yes
- Mary Stefanidakis: yes
- Ron Israel: yes

List of documents and exhibits reviewed

- Agenda item #2:
 - Climate Article by Mark Dullea.docx
- Agenda item #4:
 - Draft Climate Action Workplan - Ideate - prioritize - due diligence - finalize.pdf
 - Draft Climate Action Workplan - Streamlined.pdf
- Agenda item #6:
 - Neponset River Estuary Project.pdf
 - CPC Neponset River Estuary Project.docx
 - ESTUAR~1.DOC