

Town of Scarborough Sustainability Committee

August 28, 2024 | 8:00 – 9:30 a.m. | Scarborough Town Hall and via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Attendance – in person

Committee: Anton Bodor, Patrice Kastenzholz, David Kirstein, Deb McDonough, Rick Meinking

Town Council: April Sither

Staff: Jami Fitch, Emerson Goodrich, Autumn Speer

Guests: Dan Bacon and Abby Kimball, MNR Holdings

Attendance – Zoom

Staff: April Sither

To re-play the Sustainability Committee's 8/28/24 meeting, please use the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Zj5iFHW2rg>

Call to Order

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:05 am.
2. The Committee voted to approve the minutes from the 7/24/24 meeting. Deb motioned to approve the minutes, David seconded. Vote was unanimous.
3. New business was moved to the beginning of the agenda to accommodate the guests in attendance.

Public Comment

1. None.

New Business

1. EV Charging Ordinance
 - Dan provides an overview of his assessment of the EV charging ordinance and emphasizes his background with EVs. The Downs currently has 12 chargers which were in place pre-ordinance. Approximately nine residents drive EVs. The Downs project was designed to fit the grid's capacity by coordinating with CMP. It cannot deal in grid updates to improve capacity. With new housing projects, the EV charging ordinance will require an amount of EV chargers that is disproportionate to the demand, as well as far exceeds the grid's capacity to serve the overall project.
 - Another note touched on is the EV ready requirement, and the requirement of transformers in new developments. Dan asserts that the industry is new and demand is unknown, making the investment in transformers unwise.
 - Additionally, the requirement of Level 3 chargers is a huge expense for retail stores without the demand to meet the requirements. Dan gives examples of businesses where installed Level 3 chargers are funded by other companies such as Tesla and ChargePoint. According to Dan

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- and Abby, the ordinance should only require Level 2 chargers or not require chargers at all, given that it is not a retailer's job to provide fuel.
- The current EV chargers located at the Downs are only available to residents. They are looking at options to allow public charging in the future. Public chargers would be managed differently than resident chargers.
 - Rick notes that the ordinance went through a long and extensive vetting process, including engaging with developers and multiple opportunities for public comment. Rick inquires as to why the grid load constraints were not brought up previously in the ordinance development process and the percentage of the Downs that are currently developed. Dan notes The Downs as a whole is 80% complete).
 - Autumn clarifies that the issue is solely arising for multifamily housing and retail, not for single family housing.
 - Dan emphasizes that they are opposed to the number of charges required and that they do not want to simply pay the in lieu fee.
 - Deb expresses her openness to discussing and revision of the ordinance. Deb does not want to back off the Level 3 requirements at large retail, although maybe the required number is high.
 - Dan suggests that the definition of EV-ready in the ordinance could be revised to require space to accommodate future installation of transformers in the design, rather than requiring upfront transformer installation. The Committee is open to this proposed revision.
 - Autumn speaks to the issue of requiring retail like grocery stores to provide chargers, and suggests using the fee in-lieu better as a Town to tackle the Level 3 issue. Autumn additionally proposes a shared charging location that functions like a co-op to provide additional flexibility.
 - Anton inquires about the electrical grid load estimates provided by Dan. Dan explains that installing centralized charging infrastructure avoids drastic increases in electrical grid load and the potential need for expensive grid improvements.
 - Autumn suggests establishing a fee that developers would get back once EV charger installation has occurred. Deb suggests requiring retail to install the pad and wiring for Level 3 chargers, and potentially not the transformers, and options for private EV charging businesses to easily install chargers. Jami notes that the point of the ordinance was to have businesses plan for EV chargers at the outset rather than tearing up parking lots later on.
 - Autumn suggests having information from CMP on grid capacity pertaining to chargers.
 - Anton would like to see what the specific financial burden is on the developers.
 - Rick summarizes that the Committee should look into the redefinition of EV ready, consider what a shared charging lot model could look like, and review the Level 3 requirements.
 - Abby reaffirms the Downs does not hope to avoid the charging requirements, but also wants to remain dynamic in responding to technological developments and demand from consumers.

Old Business

1. Coastal Meetup

- Emerson provides an overview of the 8/22 Coastal Meetup. Eleven people attended the event, including Rick. There were some technology challenges, but overall the event went well.
- Emerson and Jami have a meeting scheduled with the Gulf of Maine Research Institute to go over the event and provide feedback on the process and tools.

2. Sustainable Scarborough Day

- Jami notes there are 29 vendors signed up, which is more than in 2023.
- Scarborough will now be the region's big event for National Drive Electric Week. The event had previously rotated between Portland and South Portland.

- Patrice announces that a member of the Building Decarbonization Coalition, who does demonstrations nationwide, will do an induction stove cooking demonstration.
- April connected Jami with the owner of Greencare to discuss participation and potentially using an EV to power the induction cooking demonstration.
- Patrice notes that the Rotary Club would like to participate and is trying to coordinate with a recycling company. Patrice has also yet to connect with the communications person at ACE Hardware, but they will have a booth with electric products.

Updates

1. Town Council

- April shares that there will be a workshop on the Gorham Connector Workshop at the Council's second meeting in September.
- There will be three open seats on the Council in September. There is one week left to complete nomination papers.

2. Planning Board

- There is a site walk with the Downs on 9/9, followed by a workshop.
- The FedEx project is still in progress.
- The commercial design standard consolidation is wrapping up.

3. Conservation Commission

- A roundtable with members of the Commission and representatives of the development community is scheduled for 8/28 to discuss the Commission's proposed Environmental Standards.
- Patrice notes that the South Portland Sustainability Committee had huge success with the 100 Resilient Yards program. Jami adds that pesticides are on the agenda for the Conservation Commission.

4. Open Space Plan

- More community members need to complete the Open Space Plan's feedback survey. Jami will send out the survey to the Committee. The Plan should be finished by February 2025.

5. Vulnerability Assessment

- A public meeting on 8/12, and approximately 20 people attended. There are neighborhood meetings in Higgins Beach and Pine Point scheduled in September.

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 am.

Next Meeting: September 25, 2024

Future Projects List:

- Coordination with Scarborough Public Schools
- Community solar / municipal solar array
- Municipal building energy audits
- Residential energy efficiency grants
- Electric school buses
- Recycling information for homeowners when houses change hands
- Composting
- Tree preservation ordinance