

MINUTES
ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
August 5, 2021
Held via Zoom

Call to order-7:30pm

Attending: Andrea Chasen, Liz Bone, Steve Marantz, David Miller, Minoo Tehrani.
Absent: David Morse, Marie Georgefils

1. Opening of Meeting: Andrea read the open meeting executive order pursuant to Gov. Bakers guidelines issued March 2020 with a continuation by the state's Senate.
2. Discussion of minutes from June 2, 2021. Motion made to accept the minutes by Andrea Chasen, seconded by, David Miller. Roll call; passed by all.
3. Letter to Eversource. On behalf of the committee, Andrea sent a letter to Eversource (see Addendum 2 for full letter) and on July 30, she received an email response from Bill Ackley, President of Eversource Gas (See Addendum 2 for response).

Discussion and comments on response:

- Steve stated that this is an expansive project, so they need to be corrected on it. The letter is full of half-truths and that the committee should respond.
- Massachusetts has laws to aggressively cut GHG by 2030 and Eversource seems to be fully committed to putting in a gas line that will be 3x larger than currently installed. This is counterproductive to the law and our needs.
- Steve recommends that our town needs to be proactive and that our committee needs to go in front of Select Board and request them to react to Eversource and their letter. Andrea will request to be put on the Select Board agenda for the September meeting to provide such recommendations to the SB.

In response to comments about engaging the community at this point, Andrea stated that the Longmeadow Pipeline Awareness Group (LPAG) is working on this and suggested that Michele Marantz, the LPAG chair be invited to the Committee's next meeting to provide up to date information about all actions.

Additional comments related to Eversource:

- Liz stated that the company is doing a great deal of work and already installing new pipes throughout the town, perhaps in preparation for the new pipeline.
- Dave Miller commented and asked more about what Eversource means about redundancy, and what is being done to ensure better safety of pipelines?

4. UMass clean energy extension center: David's Miller gave them all the Municipal Energy Inventory (MEI) database information and we are waiting to get a report back.

Northeast Solar came up with proposal for DPW building. Marantz wants to know if the DPW could produce energy for other town buildings as well, not just itself with panels. Right now, one of the proposal's options is to place over 1000 panels on the roof and the cost for this work is over one million dollars. So getting answers as to how much energy will be produced and who can use it is critical. The committee also needs to hear about financing options.

5. Community Educational Events.

- The committee has decided that it should help host various educational events throughout the year—perhaps quarterly. This way, the committee will help provide and understanding of its role within the town as well as educating residents and businesses about various energy and sustainability issues.
- One event to be held will focus on lawn care, water usage and lawn care appliances. We will work to bring in various speakers who can provide information—for example, with the workshop on lawn care, the committee may suggest a panel that will include a master gardener.
- Minoo offered to help develop a presentation on waste management practices as well as provide insight into best practices around the country and the globe.
- Another workshop will be developed to educate and prepare homeowners for new updates in codes and regulations in terms of appliances etc. Ex. Heat pumps.

6. Air quality testing: Last year the committee supported the one time air quality testing work. Steve would like the committee to: a) support another air quality baseline test and b) recommend that the town continue to have quarterly air quality monitoring tests. Included in the air quality monitoring is testing for methane levels, in addition to other GHG.

7. Other business: Steve also discussed how Lexington, MA is working on making sure that all policy and planning work that happens in their town must take climate change into consideration. He has suggested that this committee review the Lexington by-law and consider presenting to Longmeadow (with appropriate modifications) for the fall meeting.

Move to adjourn at 8:49 pm made by Steve Marantz, seconded by David Miller. All in favor.

Addendum 1: Committee letter to Eversource:

Energy & Sustainability Committee
Town of Longmeadow, Massachusetts
20 Williams Street, Longmeadow, MA 01106
Tel. (413) 565-4110 ● Fax (413) 565-4112



July 9, 2021

Joe Nolan, President and CEO
Eversource Energy
800 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02199

Dear Mr. Nolan:

I am writing on behalf of the Longmeadow Energy and Sustainability Committee to let you know of concerns and questions we have for the Western Massachusetts Reliability Project, a proposal, as described by Columbia Gas and your company, which our community has actively opposed for the past three years.

The mission of our committee is to provide advice and guidance to our town on ways to reduce fossil fuel use, educate our community on alternative energy sources, assist in the transition to the renewable energy sources, and advocate on behalf of our town to achieve strong and sustainable practices in all aspect of energy and environmental stewardship.

To this end, our committee is requesting that Eversource partner with us to significantly reduce fossil fuel use and to ensure that the current infrastructure in Longmeadow is safely maintained and repaired. As you may assume, in our plan for a sustainable energy future, support of an unnecessary gas expansion project that would pose health, safety, and economic threats to our town is definitely not a part of our agenda.

As you are undoubtedly aware, Massachusetts has recently enacted one of the most significant pieces of legislation to combat the current and worsening dangers of climate change. One of the key pieces of the new law is the requirement that our state reduce GHG emissions by 50% below the 1990 baseline levels within the next 9 years. In order to achieve this reduction, all state residents and businesses will be called upon to reduce dependency on energy sourced from fossil fuels. That means that all of us will have to work to transition to energy from renewable sources.

The work that your company does to help us in our efforts is a critical linchpin to our success. To that end, our Committee welcomes the opportunity to work with you, as well as other stakeholders, in our joint effort to succeed at saving our environment and ourselves from the deadliest effects of climate change.

We are all in a race against the worsening impacts of climate change. In the last few weeks alone, our country has witnessed the “heat dome” in the Northwest, resulting in hundreds of

unexpected deaths due to the intense heat; unprecedented droughts that continue in the Southwest of our country and threaten not just the health and well-being of its residents, but also threaten the “food basket” area that feeds our country; wildfires that engulf thousands and thousands of acres; and heatwaves in the Northeast. These horrific weather events, once considered to be rare, are now our new normal. And they are the result of the warming climate caused by increased greenhouse gases emitted through exploration for and use of fossil fuels.

We are opposed to any business plans that will expand and increase the supply of fossil fuel. We know that your company is due to provide reports to the state’s Department of Public Utilities that will identify your projections for improving the safety of your current infrastructure. These reports will also detail your company’s business practices as you work to meet to the new goals of the Massachusetts Climate Road Map legislation.

Our committee, which is also part of the larger regional and state efforts to reduce fossil fuel dependence, looks forward to your reports. Going forward, as you work to improve the safety records of your predecessor and maintain the existing fossil fuel infrastructure, we look to create a strong partnership with shared goals. We will also be reviewing your work with the critical eye needed to ensure that your company is working to meet the interests our community.

We welcome any opportunities to hear directly from you and your representatives at any of our future public meetings. We know that our community is engaged in all efforts to transition to renewable energy and stands ready to learn how you plan to approach these challenges. Please consider this an invitation to meet with our committee and other members of the community so that we can ask our questions, share our concerns, and hear directly from you.

Sincerely,

Andrea Chasen, Chair
Longmeadow Energy and Sustainability Committee
anchasen@gmail.com

CC: (delivered by email)
Eversource: William J. Akley, President
Joseph B. Mitchell, Community Relations & Economic Development Specialist

Mark Strange, Chair, Longmeadow Select Board
Lyn Simmons, Longmeadow Town Manager
Longmeadow Planning Board
Catherine Ratte, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
MA Department of Public Utilities
State Senator Eric Lesser
State Representative Brian Ashe
US Senator Edward Markey
US Senator Elizabeth Warren
US Congressman Richard Neal

Addendum 2: Response from William Ackley, President of Eversource Gas: dated July 30, 2021

William J. Akley
President Gas Operations
107 Selden Street
Berlin, CT 06037

William.akley@eversource.com

July 30, 2021

Andrea Chasen, Chair
Energy & Sustainability Committee
Town of Laongmeadow, Massachusetts
20 Williams Street
Longmeadow, MA 01106

Dear Ms. Chasen,

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of the Longmeadow Energy and Sustainability Committee regarding our Western Massachusetts Reliability Project.

I would like to clarify that the need for the project in Longmeadow and Springfield is to ensure reliability and safety for the over 58,000 customers and communities in the Greater Springfield area—it is not about expanding natural gas service. Currently, there is only one delivery point supplying natural gas to this area. The proposal we will submit this year to the Energy Facilities Siting Board (ESFB) proposes a second supply point, which will create important redundancy in the event of an unexpected disruption in natural gas supply to our customers. As part of the ESFB process, Eversource will continue to engage with the community and our customers to provide details about the project and will be soliciting feedback.

More broadly, Eversource supports a clean energy future and is actively participating in the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities' proceeding on the future of natural gas. Through that process, all practical pathways to transition from natural gas to lower carbon options will be evaluated. We welcome the involvement of diverse stakeholders as we consider how to achieve the cleaner energy future we all desire, while ensuring future energy options continue to be safe, reliable and affordable for all customers. Joe Mitchell from our Community Relations team has reached out to you and will keep you apprised of our efforts to improve the reliability of our current gas supply through the Western Massachusetts Reliability Project proposal.

Sincerely,

CC:

Mark Strange, Chair, Longmeadow Select Board

Lyn Simmons, Longmeadow Town Manager

Longmeadow Planning Board

Catherine Ratte, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

MA Department of Public Utilities

State Senator Eric Lesser

State Representative Brian Ashe

US Senator Edward Markey

US Senator Elizabeth Warren

US Congressman Richard Neal