



Sustainability Commission – Energy Coaching Working Group –

Energy Coaching Working Group Minutes

Meeting Date: Friday, July 12, 2024

Meeting Time: 2:00 PM

Meeting Location: via ZOOM (recorded)

Attendees: Ken Horton, Charlotte Weigel, Phil Francisco, Pat Parker-Roach

**this was mis-posted as a meeting of the Education Subcommittee, but was really a meeting of the Energy Coaching Working Group

Minutes:

Started – 12:00pm

- Agenda Item 1: Review notes from previous meetings: No notes to review.
- Agenda item 2: Charlotte reviewed potential changes to the MassSave heat pump rebates and HEAT loan coming in the 2025-2027 plan. These changes are not final but will be finalized in October.
- Agenda Item 3: Discuss Fall 2024 promotional activities
 - Grotonfest: Group reviewed “Peanuts” style coaching booth to create for Grotonfest tent. Design should be obvious throwback to Peanuts psychiatrist booth. **ACTION:** Ken volunteered to make wood frame. **ACTION:** Pat agreed to make signs for booth. We will decide on any promotional materials to include later.
 - Heat pump seminar and coaching roundtables. Group agreed that holding this event after Grotonfest would be best. Phil cautioned to avoid the first half of October to avoid conflict with Master Plan community engagement. Group agreed on Wednesday, October 23rd at 7pm. Group discussed several potential locations, but landed on the Groton Center, despite some feedback from other education seminars that it is out of the way. We hope this is not a one-time event, so we can always hold it in other locations at repeat events. **ACTION:** Charlotte will contact Groton Center to secure date.
- Agenda Item 4: MassEnergize site
 - Pat reviewed draft of website cover page. Group agreed that having Energy Coaching as one of the four key buttons is preferable. Also, under Take Actions, we want to include separate buttons for Heat Pumps and Weatherization that will also link to Energy Coaching
 - We reviewed the way the Acton page directs residents to Energy Coaching with their Google Form
 - We decided to connect residents interested in coaching via email through the website for now. **ACTION:** Pat is going to ask the town for our own email address: energycoaching@grotonma.gov. This email will come to Ken and me. Ken and I will decide who will reach out to the homeowner to continue the process. **ACTION:** When we are ready to launch the site, Charlotte will let HeatSmart Alliance know that we will start directing clients directly to us at that time, and we will add the Sustainable Groton link to their page for coaching requests as well, instead of using their triage system. Later, we will consider a Google form for connecting with interested residents that can potentially streamline the questionnaire and liability waiver – similar to what Acton created.
 - **ACTION:** Charlotte and Ken will create content for Energy Coaching page, Heat Pump Take Action page and Weatherization Take Action page. Include incentive information. Charlotte will come up with a first draft to discuss at the next meeting. Target is to have this ready as

an example to present to the Commission at the August meeting for other groups to follow to promote their activities on the website.

- Agenda Item 5: Discuss cadence of meetings
 - Ken is fine with having meetings as topics come up to discuss
 - We agreed on next meeting time – see below

- Agenda Item 6: Any other business
 - Charlotte proposed applying for the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant. She proposed three items to include in the application:
 - Funding for promotional mailing for energy coaching – this was supported
 - Funding for block of quote reviews from Abode Energy Management – this was supported
 - Funding for rebates for weatherization – This was not supported by the group for this grant. Time is too short for an application due on August 16th. We discussed the feasibility of administering rebates. Charlotte reviewed the way Concord MLP is handling weatherization rebates – information from the website. She has reached out to them for more information. The group discussed that for this to work, GELD would have to administer the rebates. Through coaching, Charlotte and Ken see a need for assisting residents financially with weatherization, especially for those on fixed incomes. They do not even qualify for the federal weatherization tax credits. When faced with the expense of a heat pump AND weatherization, weatherization can be left out. Ken noted that just having a rebate for weatherization will signal its value and the need for residents to weatherize. Weatherizing a home is a benefit to the homeowner and GELD as it avoids higher spikes of usage from heat pumps. A pilot study of rebates funded by grant money could demonstrate value.
 - **ACTION:** Charlotte will reach out to Abode to see if they can support this work and provide a quote for a grant application. She will also identify a vendor for mailing.
 - **ACTION:** Charlotte will reach out to Bruce for support for grant application.
 - The plan is to pursue quotes and filling out the application for review and approval to apply at the next Commission meeting.

Meeting adjourned – 3:30pm

Next Energy Coacing Working Group meeting: July 31st 2024

Respectfully submitted,

- **Charlotte Weigel** Sustainability Commission Member

Minutes approved by Climate Action Working Group (same people as Energy Coaching Working Group), Jan 24, 2025.