

GREEN ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 17TH, 2022

6:00pm

Virtual Meeting

Members Attending: Mary Smith (chair), Eric Hudson, Dennis Loria, Cameren Cousins, Peter Berry

Selectperson Liaison: Jim Snyder-Grant

Guest: Tom Moberg, Town of Acton Building Commissioner

Mary Smith called the meeting to order at 6:05PM, with a quorum present, via a virtual meeting with no Board Members in physical attendance, using the Zoom virtual meeting platform. Mary reads the disclaimer for a Zoom meeting.

1. No resident concerns.
2. No regular updates from GAB committee members.
3. Stretch Code and Specialized Opt-in Stretch Code Discussion.
 - a. Tom Moberg provided an initial overview of the current and pending opt-in specialized stretch code. The building performance stretch code is nothing new to Acton, as the Town has participated in the program for years now; upgrades are automatic because we are already a stretch code community. What would require a vote at Town Meeting (per the state code itself) is to opt-in for the specialized code that would realize enhanced goals around efficiency and power sources. Management and promulgation have shifted from BBRS to DOER. The significant change between the former and current code is that mandates (HERS index numbers, Passive House standards, etc.) are achievable via a few end-performance pathways, which allow for more flexibility and site-specific solutions (on-site renewables, all-electric vs. mixed fuel options, green transportation, etc.). Solar and all-electric are incentivized via points in the performance pathway model. Residential and commercial goals are part of the one stretch code: a town cannot adopt the stretch code (or opt-in code) for one and not the other.
 - b. Questions raised (to be answered later):
 - i. How much more expensive will the specialized code be? Will developers pay for it? Will consumers buy into the upfront costs for the sake of less expensive operations?
 - ii. Is the electrical infrastructure ready for electrification? Acton – and other regions – experienced problems with increased loads this summer. Also, being in New England, the demand for heating in the winter far outpaces demand for cooling in the summer.
 - iii. How many permits – new builds, significant renovations, commercial properties exchanging hands/repurposing use – would this actually effect in Acton, given square footage outlines in the new codes?

- iv. How does the specialized opt-in code overlap with proposed new fossil fuel infrastructure ban? What are the nuances between the results of each? What is the timing of each – if the ban does not pass, is there time to advocate for the opt-in code? Mary can reach out to her contacts and hopes to update us at the next GAB meeting.
- 4. Additional topics for future GAB agenda items.
 - a. Dennis proposed discussing carbon offsets for residents for personal actions, such as air travel. What is the best way to get that information into residents' hands? Eric will reach out to his contacts and bring more information to the next meeting.
 - b. Mary would like to hear from Abode Energy about their projects with the Town. She will reach out.
- 5. Approval of meeting minutes, with minor copy edits as recorded by Cameren. Minutes and edits from April 11, April 25, June 13, July 18, and August 8 approved unanimously by Mary, Eric, Dennis, and Cameren.

Mary made a motion to close the meeting at 7:10pm. Cameren seconded. All members unanimously in favor.