



Sept. 27th, 2023 6:30 P.M.
Meeting Minutes - Hybrid Participation

Board Members Present

John Hayes, Chair (In Person)
Chris Cantone, Vice Chair (Virtual)
Erin Casey (Virtual)
Doug Bowker (Virtual)
Elvis Alvarez (Virtual, only present for part of meeting)

City Staff Present:

Stacy Kilb, Sustainability Engagement Coordinator (recorder) (In Person)
Mary O'Neil, Energy Manager, Sustainability & Resiliency Dept. (Virtual)

Absent

Rick Nye
Elvis Alvarez (attended part of meeting virtually)
Andy Varela (City Council Liaison)

Public:

SATV (recording)
William Winn (applicant for Committee membership)
Margaret VanDeusen

Introductions

Mary O'Neil, Energy Manager, Salem Sustainability & Resiliency Dept.
William Winn, Applicant for SERC Committee Membership

Old/New Business

- John Hayes has been attending Planning Board meetings as Chair of SERC to give input.

- At the most recent *Conservation Commission (ConCom)* meeting, the Crowley Offshore Wind project permit was denied, with a vote of 4-1 against
 - Once posted, Draft Minutes can be found at: <https://www.salemma.gov/node/2191/minutes/2023>
- Crowley is reapplying in hopes of success. There are two articles in the Salem News about this, “Commission vote throws offshore wind plans into confusion” and “Offshore Wind Project to Return to ConCom Soon.” *(Clerk’s note: Articles are behind a paywall but their text will be emailed to Committee members and are available upon request to skilb@salem.com)*
 - John Hayes notes that the purpose of ConCom is to enforce the Wetlands Protection Act and Salem’s updated Wetlands Ordinance. Stormwater measures are relevant.
 - He comments that the ConCom could have issued an Order of Conditions to give detailed advice and guidance to application rather than denying it
 - Crowley has been giving the Planning Board discrete units on what they’re planning; information is broken up so meetings are not inordinately long
 - Doug Bowker opines that the rejection was due to light pollution and the Applicant did not have good answers on how this would affect nearby streets.
 - Lighting is the purview of the Planning Board, not the Conservation Commission, unless lighting affects the coastal ecology. The Planning Board has also raised concerns about lighting of the project.

EV Charging Across City Sidewalks Pilot Program – Cambridge, MA (John Hayes)

- Boston Globe Article:
- City of Cambridge “The Works” DPW post
- John Hayes lives in Salem but does not have off-street parking, so charging at home would be an issue
- Patti Nolan, Cambridge City Councilor, introduced the program

- Considerations: walking distance to a public charger (if not within 1/8 mile, you would qualify for one of these permits)
- Must have ramp to cover cord over sidewalk (\$150-\$400, must be ADA compliant, resources on acceptable ramps provided by the City).
- Must have a valid City of Cambridge parking permit, as well as a letter from a certified electrician certifying you have an outdoor GFCI outlet
- Online permit application
- Permit cost is \$200
- Pilot will be evaluated annually as City wants to ramp up its public access charging stations and decrease the need for charging across sidewalks
 - Video of resident running cord under ramp
- Discussion:
 - Doug Bowker:
 - This is a ‘band aid’ solution. Concerns: ramp does not look like it has experienced a New England winter.
 - Would not be able to get anything ADA compliant across Salem’s sidewalks.
 - Feels like allowing these is a little bit less motivation to figure out a citywide program for on street charging, giving false impression that it’s not needed. Also, it is an equity issue, as only residents who can afford to do this will apply, and even getting an EV is already difficult for some
 - John Hayes: We don’t know if ramp is always there, or if it gets put away between uses.
 - There is a need to eliminate competition for public charging stations, but this is a stopgap measure/
 - Chris Cantone: People underestimate the weight of these items; they are not very portable. Most likely they will be left on the sidewalk between charges.
 - Good idea for Salem to look into this b/c there will always be a limited number of public charging stations.
 - Is there a benefit to the homeowner? Are they responsible for the sidewalk? Do they get EV parking only? What if their spot is

taken and they can't charge the vehicle? This would benefit those without access to public parking.

- They don't make the spot reserved for an EV, and other car owners cannot use his chargers, so one resident worked with neighbors to make sure that his spot was open when he wanted to charge his EV.
- Chris Cantone: What legal liability does the resident have when putting their own ramp across a City sidewalk. Does the City still have responsibility for its sidewalk vs your ramp?
 - Homeowners/renters insurance is required as per the permit, so the homeowner must have some liability.
 - This is something that cities lacking off-street parking should pursue.
- John Hayes: We must tackle the climate crisis one issue at a time
- Erin Casey shares some of Doug's concerns re Salem's terrible sidewalks, especially with a stroller. They are already impassible for someone with other mobility issues.
 - It is not a great idea for Salem to reserve public parking spaces for private vehicles.
 - John Hayes: To get the permit for the ramp, if one is physically unable to put the ramp down on, say, a brick sidewalk bumped up b/c of tree roots, what happens?
- Chris Cantone may ask some questions about this issue at City Council.
- Doug Bowker Cambridge's sidewalks are in good condition; they grade over roots pushing up sidewalks, creating "ramps."
 - City would not give a permit then take responsibility for the condition of the sidewalk. Also "everything else" that's around there.
 - Salem has additional challenges re infrastructure; the City must address these.
 - Difficult for Salem to implement and risky for homeowner to take on;

- A motion for Neal Duffy to provide an update on the status of public charging in Salem, along with the considerations of charging an EV across the sidewalk, is made by Chris Cantone, seconded by Doug Bowker, and passes unanimously by roll call vote.

John Hayes	Yes
Chris Cantone	Yes
Erin Casey	Yes
Doug Bowker	Yes
Elvis Alvarez	Absent

Old/New Business, Con't.

PSA: SCOOP IT! (John Hayes)

- There is “environmental ignorance” among dog owners about the consequences of not picking up dog waste
- PowerPoint for SERC Website, will also be sent to Recycling Committee and Board of Health
 - Erin Casey comments that Salem is a member of GreenScapes, which has printed and virtual materials on this, and can help distribute.
 - <https://greenscapes.org/resources-rackcards/>
 - Dog Poop Waste = Pollution of Coastal Waters of a Coastal City with a Tourist Economy
 - John advocates for lawn signs
 - Photos of the “crime scenes” (dog waste after a snowstorm, and right next to a storm drain at curb)
 - Denver CO EPA infographic: “Pick Up Litter After Your Critter,” “Why does it matter? What can you do?”
 - <https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/682/documents/PickupAfterYourPet-Excrement.pdf>
- Salem Sound Coastwatch has found that stormwater is the number one source of nonpoint pollution. <https://salemsound.org/pollution/>
 - Nutrients from dog waste can contribute to algae blooms in the ocean.
 - There is a climate change connection as bigger rain events cause greater momentum of water entering storm drains. This is happening now.

- Doug Bowker: People don't understand the implications b/c they only think about their own dog. Maybe people think, "it's natural, it's in the wild," but it adds up, more than any natural ecosystem would support. It's not just aesthetic.
- Stacy Kilb notes that dog poop has different bacteria than what would be found in "wild" excrement, since dogs have been eating different, processed foods so their waste is not comprised of things already found in that environment.
- Erin Casey: Dog waste has twice as much bacteria as human waste. Think about that on the ground (and in the storm drains).
- Why do people bag it and leave it? This is possibly an operational issue with an outreach component as part of the solution.

~~Discuss forming a subcommittee to review SESD/water sustainability. Include Board of Health~~

City Updates

- **Events**
 - Past:
 - Historic Salem, Inc. "Yes, You CAN Decarbonize a Historic Home" presentation, 9/7 on zoom (recorded)
 - Preservation in a Changing Climate 9/12
 - Landlord Expo 9/21
 - Beverly and Salem Drive (and Ride) Electric! 9/23
 - John comments that he spoke to many owners and took photos which will be used in one of his SSU Classes
 - Shout out to Stacy and Erina
 - Shout out to Janelle, Waste Reduction Coordinator, for coordinating the Book Swap
 - Upcoming:
 - Sustainability Speaker Series - TOMORROW, Sept. 28 at Forest River Park and on zoom
 - Energy Coach/Water Registrar Office Hours – 1st Wed. At CLC 10/4

- HH Parade 10/5

City Council Liaison Update (Andy Varela)

- Not present/No updates provided

Old/New Business

- Welcome to William Winn, Stacy to share his application with SERC members and give the green light to the Mayor's office to add him to the first available City Council Agenda for approval.
- Discuss virtual-only fall/winter meetings.
 - Doug Bowker will not officially attending as a member, but feels if we have a complex issue and we need to have nuanced conversations, better if in person, but it does not have to be the majority of meetings.
 - Chris Cantone feels that October, November, and December should be virtual, with a return to hybrid afterward.
- Chris Cantone notes that additional COVID tests are available to be shipped to your home, free of charge: <https://www.covid.gov/tests> to order 4 of them.

Public Comment

- None

Approve Meeting Minutes – July 26, 2023

A motion to approve the minutes is made by Chris Cantone, seconded by Doug Bowker, and passes unanimously in a roll call vote:

John Hayes	Yes
Chris Cantone	Yes
Erin Casey	Yes
Doug Bowker	Yes
Elvis Alvarez	Absent

Upcoming City Committee Meetings

Agendas can be found at: <https://www.salemma.gov/minutes-and-agendas>

Salem Food Policy Council: First Monday of the month, 10/2/23, 6:00PM

Recycling Committee: First Tuesday of the month, 10/3/23, 6:30PM

Tree Commission: Third Monday of the month, 10/16/23, 6:00 PM

Conservation Commission: Third Tuesday of the month, 10/17/23, 6:30PM

Next SERC Meeting – Wednesday, Oct. 25th, 2023, VIRTUAL ONLY

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn is made by Erin Casey, seconded by Doug Bowker, and passes unanimously in a roll call vote:

John Hayes	Yes
Chris Cantone	Yes
Erin Casey	Yes
Doug Bowker	Yes
Elvis Alvarez	ABsent