

Tisbury Climate Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: July 25, 2022

Meeting called to order: by Melinda Loberg, Chair, at 5:37 PM.

Place: Hybrid meeting at Town Hall Annex Board of Health Meeting Room and by Zoom

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/85247982202>

Meeting ID: 852 4798 2202 Passcode: 236779

Attendance: Committee Members: at Town Hall Annex: Melinda Loberg, Louise Clough, Anna Edey, Rachel Orr, Kate Shands, Bill Straw

By Zoom: Bruce Stuart

Guests:

At Town Hall Annex:

Maura Valley, Health Agent

By Zoom:

Casey Hayward, Liaison to Tisbury Planning Board (PB)

Ben Robinson, Tisbury PB; Chair, MVC Climate Action Task Force (CATF)

Ross Seavey, Building Commissioner

Melinda began the meeting by reading the Covid disclaimer and the Zoom information.

Discussion: The TCC [Tisbury Climate Committee] needs to know more about the land around Town Hall Annex: what is owned by the Town and what might be available for climate-related installations.

Maura said that the land in question is covered by 3 maps, all of which she showed us, and all of which cover the capped landfill.

Map 20: areas A4 and A5, which includes the solar array, the generators, and the borrow pit.

Map 21: area B1, which includes the DPW and the leaching field.

Map 22: area A10, which includes the Park & Ride (P&R).

These maps can be found on the Assessors page of the Town website.

All of these areas are under the control of the Massachusetts DEP (Department of Environmental Protection). All of the areas are site-assigned to be used as landfill. It is possible to de-site-assign if it is not used for landfill. At one time, the Annex was de-site-assigned for composting and leaf and yard waste, but it was never used for that purpose. Anything we did on that land would require a modification of the post-closure use permit (PCUP), and the DEP can put conditions on such modifications because the landfill cap cannot be compromised. Deep digging is not allowed due to worries about gas escaping from the capped landfill. It is possible instead to build up land on top of the cap. There was a PCUP application in November 2011 for the solar array, but it has been lost. CVEC installed the big solar array, and Fred LaPiana (DPW Director at the time) would have submitted that request.

There are also 2 aquifer protection Zones around the Sanborn Well (Zones 1 and 2). Nothing can be done in Zone 1. Zone 2 is larger, and a few things can be done there.

The TCC took a field trip to look at the areas in question. There was a discussion about the need for maps that the Committee can use to make suggestions about climate-related installations. Rachel can make an overlay map. Maura did that for the Planning Board, and she can look for it. They will work together on that project. Maura and Bill noticed that the land at the edge of the P&R had not been cleared, which is a violation of the landfill cap agreement, and Maura said she would talk to Ross Seavey about getting that done.

The discussion then turned to ways the TCC can be helpful to the PB and the Master Plan Committee. Ben Robinson said that no decisions have been made yet with respect to the B2 District Area Plan, which is the same area covered by the maps we reviewed. We need to coordinate with all the groups that are looking at these areas and review what solar projects are in the pipeline for each of them, including the Tisbury Open Space Committee and the Vineyard Sustainable Energy Committee (VSEC), a sub-committee of the MVC CATF. Ben commented that Eversource doesn't care about projects that are small enough not to impact their operations.

Anna said that we need battery back-up for the water supply in case the grid goes down, and Ben said they have been discussing a micro grid for the water supply for just that possibility. He said college campuses are a good model for that plan, and the question is whether we build a stand-alone grid (building our own cables would be expensive) or whether we piggyback onto Eversource's, which would cost less. Anna asked if anybody is working on independence, and Ben said the Energy Committees in Aquinnah (Bill Lake, Chair) and Chilmark (Rob Hannemann, Chair) are doing that. Rachel commented that Angie Gompert said in an article that the VTA buses could be used as portable generators in an emergency. The water company is hesitant to have batteries near the wells. She asked if we could work with the VTA to have them provide buses, and Ben said the solar canopies at the VTA don't power the buses completely, and the buses would have to be retrofitted to provide energy. The Steamship Authority ferries could be used in the same way if they were designed to do so. Mobile batteries can be used in short-term situations. We need to connect to the solar field for the water supply.

Bill said the PB had considered a buy-out of the solar array in 2034, but the best-case scenario would be to let the lease lapse; the PB should be involved in that decision, and it is key to what we do with the P&R location. He added that charging stations at the P&R could be revenue-generating for the Town. Ben said the TCC should be the lead group in these decisions.

Melinda said we have more research to do in order to make suggestions to the Select Board and the PB. In response to a question from Melinda, Ben said the CATF meets on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month, and the VSEC meets every other Wednesday, mostly on Zoom. He added that the MVC is about to hire an energy planner.

Rachel then brought up the issue of the Eversource easement that starts at West Chop. She said it is 100 feet wide for its full length and that the agreement with the Town states that there are "reserved rights to cultivate" in that space. Eversource has been using herbicides there, which landowners see as a problem, especially if they are gardening in that space. Maura said Eversource doesn't see it that way. The Department of Agricultural Resources says Eversource can do whatever they want, and Eversource doesn't listen to community input. Ben said the Master Plan Committee (MPC) and the Open Space Committee will look at the power line

corridor closely. It cuts through private land in West Chop and could be used for recreation if the power lines were buried. It comprises 34 acres, mostly owned privately, some by the Town, and some by Eversource. In 2016, undergrounding was estimated to cost \$6-9 million.

There was further discussion about current and potential uses for the power line corridor.

Melinda commented that fences were put up because people were using it for dumping, and she added that it would be worth having a conversation with Ronit Goldstein from Eversource at some point. Ben said that when they talked to Eversource, they didn't know about the cultivation clause in the easement.

Melinda said we need to continue to work on proposals for the area in question and submit them to the MPC, among others, and that our next meeting will be a continuation of this discussion.

Review and Approval of Minutes: Several small corrections and additions were made to the minutes of July 11, 2022. Rachel moved that the corrected minutes be accepted, Louise seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made (Rachel) and seconded (Louise), and the motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Next Meeting: August 8, 2022 at 5:30 PM, hybrid meeting at Town Hall Annex and by Zoom.

Minutes Submitted by: Kate Shands