

EC4 Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2015

(Conf. Room A)

In attendance:

Sheila Dormody (Chairwoman)
Andy Andrade
Barbara Cardiff
Amy Rainone
Paige Bronk
Brigid Ryan (Secretary)
Christopher McNally
Tina Shepard

Sheila Dormody (Chair) opened the meeting at approximately 9:05.

Chairwoman Dormody briefly reviewed the proposed agenda, followed by a vote to approve the September 23rd meeting minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved, followed by a discussion of the meeting schedule for the board. The 3rd Friday of the month at 9:00 AM (at DEM) worked for the majority of members. The next meeting will be December 18th. Chairwoman Dormody also announced that she and DEM Director Janet Coit are waiting on the Governor to make a decision/announcement regarding the appointment of a new member for the Advisory Board (replacement for Steve Larrick).

Chairwoman Dormody asked Elizabeth Stone (RIDEM) and Brigid Ryan (Secretary) to briefly talk about yesterday's EC4 meeting at the State House (which was attended by Governor Gina Raimondo. There was a discussion about the presentations, the message the Governor delivered, model ordinances and the RI ZEV Action Plan. The issue of a model municipal ordinance for the use of renewable energy systems on homes (especially in historic areas) was discussed.

Elizabeth Stone (RIDEM) introduced Pam Sherrill who will be working with NESCAUM on the RI GHG Emissions Reduction Study. Elizabeth provided some background on the study, it's technical committee, and indicated Brigid Ryan would be serving as the Advisory Board's liaison to that technical committee (which will be occurring throughout the course of 2016).

Chairwoman Dormody then turned the table over to Barbara Cardiff who described/showed the presentation (from Capitol TV website) she provided to Rep. Lauren Carson's Study Commission on the Economic Effects of Sea Level Rise on Nov. 19th. Her presentation focused on the financial impacts to Westerly due to sea level rise (focusing on impacts from Superstorm Sandy, challenges in re-building post-storm, and direct fiscal impacts to the town of Westerly (e.g. taxes)). She discussed the need to work with other state agencies to collaborate on designing solutions to address growing challenges in Westerly.

The group then engaged in an open discussion about the challenges municipalities face in addressing resiliency and rising sea levels. Stormwater needs (both state and municipal) were also addressed.

Chairwoman Dormody then asked each of the four working groups to provide an update on progress and any other announcements they may want to offer for the group as a whole.

Amy Rainone provided a brief update on progress of the Communications working group, which would again be meeting on December 2nd. The first full meeting was used to scope out a possible approach to developing a broader outreach plan, and the attendees agreed to circulate ideas and input (via Google docs and other online resources) before the next meeting in December.

Paige Bronk provided an update on the work of the Municipal Assistance working group (which met Oct. 21st). Issues addressed includes: 1) how can the AB be more targeted/tangible in its outreach; 2) what is the low hanging fruit that can be worked on (that will show measurable results); 3) surveying municipal leaders regarding needs, priorities and challenges; 4) how to engage business leaders, and how there are significantly fewer property owners than actual business owners; 5) a discussion of the “Fortified” approach.... build it once, built it right; and 6) impacts to town budgets and planning functions.

Brigid Ryan indicated that the Plan Progress tracking group had not officially met, but will continue to coordinate with DEM staff on key issues in coming months.

There will not be a December EC4 meeting – the next full council meeting is anticipated to occur on January 13th.

The Advisory Board will meet again on December 18th at 9:00 at DEM.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:35 AM.

(Notes prepared by Elizabeth Stone, RIDEM)