



Community Resilience Working Group

Meeting Minutes – CAP Project Kickoff Meeting

May 6, 2020

The meeting convened at 7:00 pm in the Volunteer Meeting Room, Town Hall, 13 Ayer Road, Harvard, MA

Members Present: Peter Kelly-Joseph (HEAC and Chair); Christiane Turnheim (Agricultural Advisory Committee), Lucy Wallace (Select Board), Staci Donahue (Planning Board), Janet Waldron, (Conservation Commission), Ellen Sachs Leicher (Citizen Member), and Ron Ostberg (Citizen Member). Pat Natoli, Public Safety; Sharon McCarthy, Board of Health

Staff Present: Christopher Ryan (Director of Community and Economic Development)

Others Present: Hillary King, EEA; Kim Lundgren, KLA; Mike Steinhoff, KLA; Kari Hewitt, KLA; Karen Kao, KLA; and Xico Manarolla, KLA

Convene and Preamble

The meeting convened at 7:00 pm.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Ryan provided the remote meeting preamble during the public emergency. Peter Joseph-Kelly provided a welcome to the guests related to the kickoff of the project.

Statement by EEA

Hillary King introduced herself and explained her role. She noted that EEA is allowing extensions through the following fiscal year. She said that an updated contract should have a modified scope that is feasible for the Town. Peter asked Hillary to summarize the purpose of the MVP program.

Summary of Project and History

Chris Ryan gave a history of the MVP project in Harvard going back to the first phase when the Energy Committee created a subcommittee, received a prioritization grant, hired a consultant, and completed a prioritization plan. This gave Harvard MVP Community status and paved the way for the action grant which was awarded for a Climate Action Plan. Subsequently, Harvard formed a new committee, the Community Resilience Working Group and this group helped move forward in retaining a consultant, Kim Lundgren Associates (KLA).

Proceeding through uncertainty from the initial smaller award and truncated timeline to the Covid-19 crisis to receiving word that an extension will be available through the State. Chris and KLA continue to discuss how a newly modified scope will look like given these circumstances.

Sharon McCarthy asked how long the extension can be for. Hillary King noted that it depends on how much of the funding should be moved into FY 2021. Chris noted that a lot of public process could be moved into FY 2021.

Summary of Project Scope and Discussion

Kim Lundgren discussed the scope revised up to this point taking into consideration the pending extension approval. How to maximize the extension given Covid-19 still with us is key. Only the agricultural component would be a complete element from the plan. KLA will look at policies and prior plans for guidance and come up with best practices for all of the modules.

Key deliverables will be:

1. Vision
2. Review of Existing, Policies, Plans, Bylaws
3. GHG Inventory
4. Climate Resilience and Nature-Based Solutions Framework
5. KLA Module Recommendations
6. Community Engagement
7. Communications Materials for Agricultural Community
8. Full CAP for Agriculture

Also includes what a plan would have related to implementation including the steps, how long it would take, funding sources, engagement, tactics, and tease out what makes the most sense.

Chris asked about how best forestry management could be handled and whether this project or another might be the best approach. Mike Steinhoff discussed how this could be done as perhaps a regional approach due to how forests do not line up with town boundaries.

Kim read and responded to questions from Hillary and Christiane about having this plan related to agriculture being a model. Peter opened the floor up to questions and comments. Lucy asked for the proposal to be emailed so that she could read and digest.

Discussion of Schedule and Next Steps

Chris talked about having a timeline that ensures the success of the project. Also mentioned were the tasks that the Working Group would need to start working on. Also noted was how we can seamlessly dovetail the agricultural portion back into the full plan.

Chris talked also about the new grant application with Bolton and Devens as a regional project as a way to focus on some elements that will not be focused on in detail in this plan. Further, the Committee taking ownership on the remaining modules of the plan will be an important factor related to success.

Ron noted that a conversation on communications would be valuable. He noted the range of emails he receives every day on very good topics. Getting this out to a wider audience would likely get a return on the investment.

Other Committee Business

Sharon asked about the WPI project and Chris noted that the students would be reporting their findings on the 12th of May.

Adjournment

At 8:20 PM, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.