



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

of the Energy & Environment Commission (EEC)
in the city of Newport, Rhode Island

I. 2022 Activities

1. Energy Use Baseline
2. Community Choice Aggregation
3. Sustainable Events Guidelines & Recommendations
4. SNEP Workshops
5. Aquidneck Island Earth Week
6. Stormwater Management

II. Member Attendance

I. 2022 Activities

1. Energy Use Baseline

The 2017 Comprehensive Plan of the City of Newport calls for an Energy Use Baseline to get a measurement of how much energy is used by municipal buildings and services so that the city has a comparison to base 20% energy use reduction goals on. This work is listed as high priority and this commission along with the City Council are listed as the Responsible parties.

As such, the EEC has been pursuing the creation of a baseline in Newport. Based on research from how other municipalities in the U.S. have done it, we are proposing hiring a consultant to

produce the energy use baseline and also framing the data in terms of a greenhouse gas (GHG) emission analysis. An analysis of our GHG emissions from municipal buildings and services is simply a reframing of the energy use data that takes into account what types of energy are being used.

As of December 2022, the commission has drafted a RFP and has started discussions with our commission liaison on the council. We have also had a meeting with Newport's Director of Planning & Economic Development, Trish Reynolds, and our City Planner, Tuuli Martin on this topic.

Our intended target is to work with Council to release this RFP in early 2023, so that a consultant can be sought out and hired, and the work to create the energy use baseline and GHG emission analysis can get underway.

Measuring our current GHG emissions and energy use is a critical step in taking thoughtful and strategic action to reduce our carbon emissions and become a more resilient city and a climate leader. To date in the state of Rhode Island, Providence is the only other city that we know of that has conducted a municipal energy use baseline.

2. Community Choice Aggregation

The EEC has monitored the progress of the Community Choice Aggregation plan that we were a part of bringing to Newport. We seek occasional updates from the consultant, Good Energy, on the status of the program. Our understanding is that as of September 2022 a new electricity supplier with competitive rates has been secured, and the program is due to launch in May 2023. The consultant will roll out significant outreach and communications to customers in Newport ahead of May (as laid out in their full plan submitted to the city in 2021). It is also our understanding that City Staff in Newport are being kept up to date on this, so they may know more. A highlight from a September press release from the consultant is below, and the full press release is attached to the end of this report.

Six Rhode Island cities and towns have joined together to launch aggregation programs that leverage community-wide buying power to provide their residents and businesses with new options for electricity supply. These Community Electricity Aggregation (CEA) programs will focus on providing competitively priced rates while also including additional clean energy from Rhode Island. The new programs, set to launch in May 2023, are the culmination of a multi-year effort involving the communities of Barrington, Central Falls, Newport, Portsmouth, Providence and South Kingstown working with electricity aggregator Good Energy. By working together, these communities can harness significant buying power, collectively representing over 100,000 eligible electricity users.

3. Sustainable Events Guidelines & Recommendations

The commission has been pursuing a project to review and update 2012/13 sustainable event guidelines created by this commission 10 years ago. We expect to present updated sustainable event guidelines and recommendations for the city to the City Council in 2023.

4. SNEP Workshops

Members of the commission attended on-going workshops of the Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Network.

In 2021, the City of Newport responded to the 2021 SNEP Network Call for Participants and was awarded technical assistance by the Network. SNEP Network partner organization Throwe Environmental, LLC was tasked with developing a community-based climate resilience implementation and financing strategy to guide Newport's short- and long-term climate actions. Results of this work are detailed throughout the final SNEP Newport plan submitted to the City in late 2022.

The commission hopes to stay abreast of what comes out of the SNEP final report and learn how we can help around implementation, etc.

5. Aquidneck Island Earth Week

This commission worked with our liaisons Jamie Bova and Angela McCalla to introduce a Resolution establishing April 16 - 23 as Aquidneck Island Earth Week 2022. Members of the commission also met regularly with a coordinating committee for that week.

Ultimately, the commission hosted a trash clean-up event in Miantonomi Park on a Saturday during that week in partnership with Clean Ocean Access. City staff supported the pick up of the materials collected.

6. Stormwater Management

In our September meeting, we were joined by partners from the Newport Open Space partnership including Lily Dick of the Newport Tree Conservancy, Ellen Nichols (a former member of this commission) and James Galloway of the partnership. Lily gave a presentation on water quality conditions to due storm water runoff of Almy Pond and restoration efforts there and talked about forming, in conjunction with the City, **a public education and action program** on what can be done by residents to ameliorate water quality issues at Almy Pond and other coastal locations such as Easton's Beach.

The commission was enthusiastic about exploring ways we could support such a program and are awaiting more information.

II. Member Attendance

**Meetings were canceled due to varying circumstances including chair transition in June, August and December, so only 9 total were held.*

	<u>Meetings Attended (9 Total)</u>
Sean O'Connor - <i>Chair since July 2022</i>	Attended 8 of 9 meetings (missed May)
Laurie Love (member since 2020)	Attended 7 of 9 meetings (missed Jan., Sept)
Sam Whitin (member since 2021)	Attended 7 of 9 (missing April, October)
Avery Robertson (member since 2021)	Attended 6 of 9 (missing Feb, July, Sept.)
Emily Conklin - <i>NEW MEMBER since February 2022</i>	Attended 8 out of 8 possible
Anne DuBose Joslin - <i>NEW MEMBER since June 2022</i>	Attended 4 out of 4 possible