



WESTFORD ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING STATIONS WORKING GROUP Meeting of May 24, 2022

Approved on 6/7/2022

A meeting of the Westford Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station Working Group (EVWG) was held at 7:15 PM on May 24, 2022, virtually via Zoom.

The following WG members were present: Chauncey Chu, Jerimy Arnold, Gerry DiBello, Bob Shaffer, Tom Teller

Town Staff present: Sierra Pelletier, Assistant Planner

1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 7:17 pm.

2. Old/New Business

- Jerimy commented that National Grid has a program that saves certain residential EV owners money if they charge their cars at home during off-peak hours. Currently, it allows the customer to save \$50 on their energy bill and then offers ongoing monthly savings. Using the timer on their charger or their vehicle, a ChargeSmart phone app controls the time when you can charge your EV.
- Chauncey commented that he had further discussion about Town Counsel opinion with the Director of Land Use Management. Chauncey explained Town Counsel has determined that the zoning regulations shouldn't mandate EV or EV make-ready provisions in residential construction. We need to strike out references to this zoning change in our current draft documentation. Bob commented that in a year or two we can revisit the residential make-ready provision. By then, case law and Attorney General's office rulings might favor these provisions.
- EV or EV make-ready provisions also cannot be mandated for multi-family housing since Westford does not directly regulate multi-family development in general.
 - Sierra explained that much of Westford's multi-family developments are 40Bs (aka Comprehensive Permits) which are reviewed by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Westford has met its 10% affordable housing goal and so is not obligated to approve 40Bs, but occasionally a "friendly 40B" may come through. 40B is a state law, and the zoning bylaw is separate from that, so 40Bs are outside the scope of this Group. Chauncey proposed that we could discuss this subject informally with the Chair of the ZBA. Chauncey will take this proposal as an action item.
- Chauncey asked Bob and Sierra if we could offer developers incentives to create EVSE make-ready parking spaces in their new developments. Bob suggested this topic be researched between meetings.

- Chauncey will make a report of this group's progress at the June 6 Planning Board meeting. Sierra will add Chauncey's report to the agenda.

3. Draft Potential Amendments to the Westford Zoning Bylaw

- We will strike our suggested EVSE parking space changes for Zoning Bylaw Appendix D, Section B – Exempt and Institutional Uses and Section C – Agricultural Uses. Instead, we will concentrate on suggested changes for the other sections of Appendix D.
- There was a group discussion about mandating that 75% of EVSE make-ready spaces must be built within three years of issuing the certificate of occupancy. It was noted that this type of regulation would be difficult to enforce. We need to concentrate on making clear how many spaces in a given development must be fully ready when construction is complete. Chauncey will modify our current proposed wording.
- Bob commented on the "Required EV Charging Stations" wording regarding what happens three years after project construction is completed. Chauncey clarified that developers are given three years to transition from make-ready spaces to fully operational spaces. There was discussion of how to possibly accomplish this, and it was concluded that it is not realistic nor in the Group's purview. Chauncey will change the language to drop the three-year requirement. Gerry suggested the language in the Franklin County, NJ document that we have referred to in the past could be used. Tom commented that our current suggested wording requires that 7.5% of the spaces must be make-ready at the time of occupancy, and that can be enforced up front. There was additional discussion regarding the percentages of installed and make-ready spaces. Most group members agreed that the percentages as written are satisfactory.
- Tom commented that in some cases like "Motor Vehicle Services" the number of spaces to be installed will be very small. In this case where the number of operational spaces to be installed is a fractional number it must be rounded up to a whole number. Sierra gave the example of the math coming out to 8.4 spaces which would be rounded to 9. She also said that some bylaws use language such as "...or x number of spaces, whichever is greater". Chauncey will revise the wording to reflect this suggestion for the next meeting.
- The group agreed that Appendices A and B are okay as-is and section D will be revised for our next meeting.
- Tom discussed the definitions section. Different documentation he has looked at have differing definitions of "make-ready" parking spaces. Brookline's documentation that we've referred to regarding EVSE spaces refers to the latest edition of the Massachusetts Building Code (currently being revised). The current ninth edition of the code only defines level 2 EVSE and not anything referring to make-ready or EVSE ready.
- Bob commented that all definitions will have to stand alone because they will be alphabetized and integrated with all the other Zoning Bylaw definitions. Tom and Bob will work together on finalizing the definitions.
- Tom also discussed standardizing on the term "Electric Vehicle EVSE Ready Space" for the definition section, even though there are other variations of the term, this is the most descriptive.

- Jerimy recommended that we remove the voltage numbers from the Level 2 and Level 3 definitions. The voltage numbers can vary but the term “AC” is the most important. Bob commented that we have to instead reference the convention or standard in the state electrical code and other applicable code. Referencing codes will alleviate having to change zoning bylaw wording if standards change in the codes.
- EV charging signage – We might use wording that’s in the Franklin County, NJ document which refers to the MUTCD standards.
- Based on a request from Chauncey, Gerry presented an informational chart showing various Mass State grant funding programs available to fund 60% to 100% of the costs to install Level 2 chargers at: Multi-Unit and Educational Campuses, Privately Owned Parking Lots and Gov’t Owned Property, and Workplace and Fleet Charging.
- There was discussion about Tom’s proposed changes to Zoning Bylaw Section 5.1 Off-Street Parking Regulations. Tom added suggested wording that adds to the 5.1.5 Parking Standards “Electric Vehicle Charging Spaces” for standard and handicapped spaces. The Group ultimately decided to focus only on the Appendices for this current set of proposed amendments.
- There was discussion on when we should bring our suggested zoning changes to the Appendices and Definitions to a Planning Board meeting. Their schedule was discussed and it was noted the Group would like to propose the initial draft for comment at the Planning Board meeting after the June 6th meeting, though the date will need to be verified.

Item taken out of order

5. Set Date, Time, and Scribe for Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be virtual on June 7 at 7:00 pm. Potentially, we may meet again on the June 15.
- Jerimy will be the recording secretary for the June 7 meeting.
- For our June 7 meeting Tom and Chauncey will ready a final draft of Appendices A, B, and D for the group to approve.

Bob left the meeting at 9:23PM

4. Approve Minutes May 10, 2022

- Tom motioned to approve the May 10 meeting minutes as drafted, seconded by Gerry, and approved unanimously by roll call (4-0-0).

6. Adjournment

- A motion to adjourn was made by Jerimy, seconded by Tom, and voted unanimously by roll call (4-0-0). Meeting adjourned at 9:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gerald DiBello
5/31/2022