

Green Marblehead Implementation Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2025

Members Present: Thatcher Kezer (Chair), Alex Eitler, Lisa Wolf, Eileen Mathieu, Andrew Petty, Joseph Kowalik, Jean Jacques Yarmoff
Meeting Called to Order: 3:35 PM

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from January 9, April 10, and June 12 were approved by unanimous roll call vote, with Jean Jacques Yarmoff abstaining as he was not a member at that time. The August 14 minutes were also approved unanimously.

Green Communities Update

The Sustainability Coordinator reported on several initiatives. The Town's website transition to marbleheadma.gov is underway, with full resolution expected in another month. The Select Board approved the Zero-Emissions Vehicles First Procurement Plan on September 10. An Energy Reduction Plan is being developed by PowerOptions and will be presented to the Select Board next month, with a vote anticipated in October.

Discussion also focused on the Renewable Energy Surcharge (RES). Jean Jacques Yarmoff requested that Town Counsel confirm whether the Marblehead Municipal Light Board (MMLB) has the sole authority to levy the surcharge. He also suggested the Select Board send a letter of support to MMLB, encouraging them to adopt the surcharge. Logan Casey explained that because Marblehead is not 3A compliant, the Town cannot access the designation grant or any subsequent Green Communities program grants.

Sustainable Heritage Project Discussion

The MAPC submitted its report on the Marblehead Sustainable Heritage Project, which was distributed to committee members earlier in the month. Since members had not yet reviewed the document, the discussion was deferred. Next steps will include reviewing recommendations at the next meeting, presenting the final project summary to the Select Board, and working with the Old and Historic Districts Commission on implementation.

Project Updates

The Mass CEC On-Street EV Charging Study began with an initial meeting involving Commonwealth Electrical Technologies and Leidos Engineering. The grant will fund all planning activities, including engagement forums, surveys, and site visits. The project runs from September 2025 through February 2026 and focuses on Level 2 residential chargers, while municipal charging plans will also include some Level 3 chargers.

The Council on Aging has arranged a free one-month demonstration lease of an eJEST electric minibus with a 130-mile range, set to arrive September 22. The School Department has also purchased an electric minivan, now charging at Widger Road.

Committee discussion also addressed the Marblehead High School roof repair project. Eileen Mathieu raised the potential benefits of including high-density coverboard in the repair to allow for future solar installations. Solect Energy provided an opinion letter supporting this option. While some members and groups supported the idea, concerns were raised that no structural study has confirmed the roof's ability to support solar panels and that funding for such a study has not been secured. Thatcher Kezer cautioned that introducing new information at this stage might delay a time-sensitive project. The committee decided not to send a letter to the School Facilities Subcommittee.

Public Comment

Elaine Leahy of Sustainable Marblehead expressed concerns about plans to replace the Green Street Playground's grass fields with synthetic turf. She cited health risks and environmental impacts, noting that organic grass fields align better with the Town's Net Zero goals by sequestering carbon. Some members requested more data comparing turf and grass fields' carbon footprints over their lifetimes. Others pointed out that Marblehead's grass fields are maintained organically and mowed with an electric mower. The committee concluded that more information is needed before making a recommendation.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM by unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Mathieu
September 24, 2025

Minutes Approved: October 9, 2025