

Ashfield News February 2023

Energy Committee Working With Bentley University on Greenhouse Gas Inventory

The 2021 MA Clean Energy and Climate Plan set 2 important goals: to cut MA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in half by 2030 and to be carbon neutral by 2050. Greenhouse gases are gases, like Carbon Dioxide and Methane, which have increased due to human activity and are causing climate change. A major goal of the Energy Committee is to help the town of Ashfield to reduce our “carbon footprint” (the amount of Greenhouse Gases our activities produce) in keeping with the State’s emission reduction goals. We seek grants and partnerships with organizations to achieve these goals without costing the town money. Our newest partnership is with Bentley University in Waltham MA.

Beginning in February, a group of 3-5 Bentley University students will be using the MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory software to give us a sense of Ashfield’s current energy use and associated Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.

As stated on the MAPC website, “GHG inventories are essential to informing any climate action plan. An inventory allows you to identify and target the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in your community and provides a baseline to measure the impact of future climate mitigation programs.”

The students will be using available data to help quantify GHG emissions associated with our town, looking at municipal, residential, and commercial buildings, transportation/vehicles, waste, and solar energy. They will meet several times during the spring semester with the Committee’s liaison for the project and will provide us with a written report at the end of their semester at no cost to the town.

This report will be extremely helpful in focusing/ prioritizing future Energy Committee work to help us target the sectors with the greatest contribution to our GHG emissions. It will also give us an idea of how Ashfield is doing as compared to neighboring towns.

Contact us at energy@ashfield.org with suggestions, comments and questions. The Energy Committee meets monthly in lower town hall. You are invited to attend a meeting. Propose ways to increase the use of clean energy and reduce our carbon footprint and production of GHGs. Offer support for one of our projects. We truly welcome your input. Our next meeting will be Friday February 17 at 9am.