

“Beyond Cape Wind” Community Planning Process
Kickoff Meeting

April 14, 2005

9 am – 12 pm, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Organized by

Cape & Islands Self-Reliance

MIT-USGS Science Impact Collaborative (MUSIC)

Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR)

Water Energy & Ecology Information Services (WEEinfo)

Facilitated and sponsored in part by

Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC)

Summary

Joan Muller of WBNERR greeted participants, acknowledged MTC support, and thanked MUSIC for contributing to this endeavor.

Greg Watson of MTC provided a brief introduction to the meeting, and he proposed that all energy stakeholders in the Cape & Islands region may find common ground within the following three statements:

1. Increased attention to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy conservation is a good thing.
2. The Cape & Islands region is blessed with an abundance of renewable resources, and opportunities exist for significant efficiency gains.
3. Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket face common challenges such as high energy costs, seasonal economies, environmental and public health issues, and climate change.

Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations and detailed their personal and/or professional interests in energy-related issues. (Attendees are listed on Attachment A, as is the agenda for the meeting.) Many issues were identified, including sustainability, public health, economic development, fuel security, national security, wildlife and ecosystem protection, eutrophication, air quality, ocean planning and zoning, renewable energy technology, public education, workforce development, climate change, power supply, distributed generation, planning and permitting, energy efficiency, and consumer advocacy.

Chris Powicki of WEEinfo described the current situation, where Cape & Islands communities, agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals are working on, concerned about, or interested in diverse energy-related topics. They generally focus on specific energy sectors, fuels, or technologies or on individual challenges such as costs, security, air and water quality, public health, economic development, and climate change.

Megan Amsler of Self-Reliance introduced the goals of both the community planning process and this initial meeting. Long-term objectives are to engage stakeholders in looking at energy in a comprehensive, coordinated, collaborative, and inclusive manner and in working together to identify and achieve common goals. Near-term objectives are to engage stakeholders in

characterizing the economic, environmental, and social implications of the present energy economy and in developing a consensus knowledge base for future public outreach, planning, and policymaking activities.

Ali Mostashiri and Herman Karl of MUSIC provided an overview of joint fact-finding (JFF) processes as a means for using science to create a common definition of a problem and to identify and evaluate possible policy, behavior, and other interventions. Two tools were introduced: a systems representation depicting the Cape & Islands energy economy and a series of knowledge briefs characterizing the “true costs” of the current energy situation. Results to date from the “Coordinated Community Planning Survey” were summarized, and their use in developing a draft systems representation was discussed. (Initial survey results and the draft systems representation are presented in Attachment B.)

Attendees asked questions and offered opinions on JFF, the model, and the knowledge briefs. Significant attention was focused on the possible limitations of processes and tools that reflect rational analysis but are intended for use in influencing decisions often made based on emotional considerations. Discussion also addressed whether this initiative is intended to produce predetermined policy or other outcomes. Organizers noted that (1) JFF offers stakeholders the opportunity to express their values as they compile, analyze, and apply science and knowledge, so it is not a purely rational endeavor; (2) interventions identified and pursued through JFF may have an emotional component; and (3) JFF provides stakeholders with a forum for determining and pursuing common goals.

After a brief intermission, attendees highlighted energy-related issues facing the Cape & Islands region in order to help in identifying priority topics to be addressed via knowledge briefs. Numerous economic, environmental, and social issues were identified, with possible causes and effects covering a range of temporal and geographic scales. Discussion turned toward the possible format of, content of, and audience for these informative communications.

The meeting concluded with consensus that additional stakeholder interaction would be beneficial, along with conversation on next steps. Near-term steps are highlighted below:

- A quick survey will be prepared to summarize the many economic, environmental, and social issues identified by stakeholders and to aid them in prioritizing topics for knowledge briefs.
- A process will be proposed for developing, reviewing, approving, and disseminating the knowledge briefs.
- A subsequent meeting will be planned to engage stakeholders in developing a consensus vision of the energy future for the Cape & Islands region.

Next Steps

Stakeholders may review the “Issues” summary and fill out a quick survey to specify priority topics at <http://surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=721201018889>. After the response deadline, results will be compiled, a pared down list of topics will be developed for the “true cost” knowledge briefs, and a collaborative process will be proposed for pursuing the priority topics. In addition, a visioning forum is being planned, with support sought from regional, state, and federal funding sources. Updated information on the next meeting’s date and time will be available soon.