

2 June 2009

7:30 PM, Room 126 Town Hall.

Present: B. Kosicki; Gary Green, M. Graetz, S. Pratt

1. The minutes for the May meeting were accepted as written and revised.
2. South Acton Train Station. We discussed a draft letter to be sent to the South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee. The letter states the fact that these lights do not comply with the 1984 Acton Lighting Bylaw which was in effect when they were installed, and gives the reason for this non-compliance.

Comments included

- the need to add “appropriate level of lighting” as well as that the lights should be “fully shielded”;
- correction of a misleading sentence construction “complaints of ...lights that were installed by neighbors and others...”
- add link to bylaw

The committee voted to send the letter as amended.

3. Future form of OLEC, and discussion of OLEC combining with some other standing committee such as the Green Advisory Board.

Members were in agreement that there was a need for continued oversight of outdoor lighting issues, since these are often overlooked in a big project. The Bylaw covers commercial developments, but the Town and Schools are by far the biggest single user of outdoor lighting and the Bylaw is only voluntarily followed by these entities. Also, residents are not covered by the Bylaw.

Activities planned by OLEC include:

- Getting agreement from Schools to follow bylaw when practical
- Attempting to formalize the School and Town agreement to follow bylaws when possible
- Addressing the HS campus lighting
- Addressing the South Acton Train Station lighting
- Support of the Planning Office Enforcement Officer (update his needs in this regard).
- Review of how well the 2004 Outdoor Lighting Bylaw is working. Need fixes?
- Support for citizen complaints on outdoor lighting
- Investigation of midnight-off lighting controller for some streetlights
- More proactive education program for residents on what constitutes “responsible, good-neighbor lighting”.

Discussion of possible combination with Green Advisory Board concluded that this could be structured to work (in OLEC’s opinion). But there are many details that would need

to be worked out, and of course the GAB would need to be in favor of this combination. There are a number of ways that this combination might be done, and the next step would be a discussion with the GAB about this.

It was noted that besides Paulina Knibbe, who mentioned the possibility of an OLEC-GAB combination in the November 2008 oversight meeting with OLEC, two other BoS members have also expressed their support of OLEC exploring such a combination. A positive consequence of such a combination would be more permanence of outdoor lighting oversight in the Town, since OLEC is a temporary committee, its existence only continues from year-to-year at the pleasure of the BoS (and it is presumed that the GAB is a Standing Committee with more permanence). Another positive aspect of this combination is that GAB already has an agreement with the School Committees to work on their behalf also, whereas OLEC only has an informal agreement with the Acton School Committee to carry out work on its behalf. As noted above, the Schools constitute the largest single source of outdoor lighting in Acton besides the streetlights.

BK will contact the GAB to set up a meeting with them to discuss this issue, hopefully as soon as practical (before the middle of summer, when availability of members falls off). The oversight meetings of both OLEC and GAB have been scheduled for the same night (October 19) probably in anticipation that there will be a discussion by both committees of a possible combination.

4. Website. SP briefly reviewed the new format of OLEC's website. He found the format a big improvement over the previous OLEC website. His general view is that we can live with a few remaining small errors in the website until the IT person supporting it returns in late Fall.

5. Items tabled until next meeting.

School parking lot review by architect lighting expert- TM

Discussion of new Chair/ Vice Chair of OLEC-wait until after GAB discussions

6. Next regular meeting 7 July, Tuesday, at 7:30PM in room 121. This meeting may be cancelled if a combination meeting around the same date with GAB can be scheduled.