



I. BASIC INFORMATION FOR COMMITTEE COORDINATOR ORGANIZATION:

1. **Name of organization serving as *steering committee*:** Worcester Community Energy Alliance
2. **Location of organization serving as *coordinator*⁵ (Town, State):** Boston, MA
3. **Who are the core individuals leading the project?** Jeuji Diamondstone, Luz Vega, Michael Carroll, Michelle Wenderlich, Steven Denson, Matthew Ham, Matthew Feinstein, Alex Papali
4. **When did the group first start working together?** 2013
5. **What is the purpose of the group?** This new organization builds on local energy work done over the last few years, to formalize the efforts of previous informal collaborations. The WCEA aims to provide a home in the Greater Worcester area for individuals and groups interested in advancing local and statewide clean energy projects and policies, with a focus on capturing the economic and other non-energy benefits of renewable generation, energy efficiency, storage etc.
6. **Please include links to the group's website/Facebook page/Twitter account if applicable:** <https://www.facebook.com/events/178298105914407/>
7. **Does the group have a contact list with emails and/or mailing addresses? If yes, what is the number of addresses on the contact list?** The list developed over the last year or so during our evolution as an independent group includes 61 individuals who have attended our meetings or events, some of whom represent their organizations. With the imminent launch of the WCEA, we anticipate this number will grow rapidly.
8. **Does the group have paid staff? If yes, how many staff people? How many hours per week are paid?** Not yet, as we are still seeking startup funding. But we are planning for two part-time staff positions within the coming year for a total of 24 hours/week, plus a paid internship at 16 hours/week.
9. **What is the tax status of the group?** We are currently an ad hoc group.
 - a. **If ad hoc, does the group have a bank account in its name?** Not yet, but imminently, as soon as the group approves this step at a December 5 meeting.
 - b. **If no, does the group have a fiscal sponsor?** Not yet, but we anticipate having one within the coming few months.
 - c. **If yes, what is the name of the fiscal sponsor?**
 - d. **If 501(c)(3), what is the group's Employer Identification Number (EIN)?**
10. **Please share a few photos that highlight the group's work and the people involved.**
Attached.
11. **Please share the embed code of any group videos you have posted online.**
blob:<https://www.facebook.com/d2d27815-fb5c-4dbf-8c7d-8da620f61fe9>

II. GENERAL COMMITTEE INFORMATION:

1. Steering Committee Name: Worcester Community Energy Alliance

2. Amount Requested (Up to \$5,000): \$5000

3. What is the primary focus of your committee? (Select one)

Energy & Climate ✓

Food

Land & Water

New Economy

Environmental Health

4. What is the secondary focus of your committee? (Select all that apply)

Energy & Climate

Food

Land & Water

New Economy ✓

Environmental Health ✓

5. What is the geographic region that your committee will serve? Please include a list of communities. We plan to serve the Greater Worcester area, including towns in Worcester County such as Auburn, Grafton, Shrewsbury, Millbury and Holden, with initial focus on Worcester proper.

III. COMMITTEE COORDINATOR:

1. Who will serve as the primary contact(s) from your organization for the committee? Alex Papali

2. Please describe this / these individuals' experience with and/or style related to building and maintaining networks. Alex has nearly two decades of experience with organizing on a range of campaign areas in Massachusetts, including over six years on clean energy and Zero Waste campaigns at Clean Water Action of Massachusetts. Alex has invested considerable time over the last several years building relationships among, and supporting the efforts of, the community of people and groups working on energy issues in Worcester, and is helping lead the transition to a distinct independent organization focused on clean local energy. His approach is to empower local leaders to make the decisions that are in their own best interest, by ensuring access to a full range of relevant information and opportunities to interact with decision-makers, and facilitating dialogues that elicit informed decisions.

3. Shared leadership is critical for the success of a network and to ensure its sustainability in the long term. How will the coordinator(s) support the network while also encouraging and modeling shared leadership? As noted above, Alex's aim is to provide a foundation for deliberation and informed collective decision-making by the full group. This may come in the form of drawing up comprehensive meeting agendas with local leaders, helping keep discussions focused on the group's desired outcomes, working with local leaders to set up conversations with targets, helping brainstorm outreach or media techniques and opportunities etc. But in all cases, the local

community's interests and leadership are of primary importance, meaning, among other things, that decisions are made by consensus and rotation of roles is encouraged and supported. Though Alex will serve initially in the coordinator role, the group will work towards rotating this role to a locally based leader during the grant period as capacity becomes available.

4. What resources/workshop/skills would be useful to help the coordinator(s) perform this role? Broadly speaking, Alex is well suited to the task at hand. However, in general the group has expressed a need for training in popular education models and techniques, to enhance the appeal and effectiveness of the group's outreach and educational events. This kind of training could be quite useful in developing the skillset and leadership of all members of the group, which in turn would reduce dependence on the abilities or skills gaps of any one coordinator.

IV. COMMITTEE NETWORK:

1. Please list the key groups or individuals that will participate in the committee and the respective roles of each:

A. Worcester Solidarity and Green Economy Network (SAGE): Matt Feinstein brings many assets to our work, including broad administrative and organizing experience, local contacts, knowledge of relevant energy and economic issues, etc. Being closely allied with the goals of WCEA, SAGE will inform WCEA's decisions and help mobilize residents when needed.

B. Southeast Asian Coalition (SEAC): Anh Vu Sawyer is a seasoned organizer, and will help mobilize support for our goals from among Southeast Asian and Arabic-speaking communities in Worcester.

C. Dismas House: David McMahon has led projects that demonstrate clear benefits from clean energy investments, especially for those at society's margins. He will help guide the group's policy positions and local projects, and facilitate connections with relevant power brokers.

D. Worcester Academy: Michael Carroll has led sustainability planning and implementation at a large local institution and will help inform the group's policy positions and local projects.

E. Coop Power: Jeuji Diamondstone has long experience as an advocate for clean energy and climate mitigation, particularly in promoting the many benefits of energy efficiency. She has taken a central role in the group as a local organizer and convenor of meetings, and holds key relationships that will be useful during the group's evolution.

F. Clean Water Action: Alex Papali will serve as the group's initial coordinator.

G. Luz Vega is an organizer with a passion for outreach and mobilization, especially in the Latino community. She contributes those skills and her developing interest in local clean energy work.

H. Michelle Wenderlich is a local advocate for clean energy innovation, and brings deep knowledge of the global clean energy landscape through research for a related doctoral degree.

I. Matthew Ham brings a vision for a speedy transition to clean local energy and will assist with various tasks related to the group's development.

2. Please describe existing relationships/collaborations between the communities/groups within this region as related to the committee's goals. All of the groups participating as core

members of the WCEA have a shared history of building a grassroots clean energy advocacy and organizing infrastructure over the last few years. Given that the number of groups active on these issues is not large in this region, the ones that are active tend to be all the more passionate and cognizant of the importance of their roles. Consequently, there is a shared desire for effectiveness and building more grassroots power. The Worcester SAGE Alliance has convened conferences and meetings for several years, often focused on local sustainability issues, and many of the WCEA's participants met through those forums. The energy work has since spun off into the current distinct organization based on the group's desire to focus on local energy efforts. Most recently, the WCEA worked to hold a forum on local energy work on October 1 at Worcester Academy, and worked with several key allied organizing groups to invite many participants with little or no previous exposure to these issues. These included the Southeast Asian Coalition (SEAC), Ex-Prisoners and Prisoners Organizing for Community Advancement (EPOCA) and former members of Worcester Neighbor to Neighbor (the chapter was disbanded prior to the Forum). The enthusiastic response to the forum encouraged the development of the WCEA as a stand-alone organization.

3. How will this regional committee build upon existing relationships to further Mass Power Forward efforts within the region? Our vision for the coming years will go a long way towards moving the central MA region towards the campaign goals of Mass Power Forward, as we are committed to maximizing clean distributed energy resources behind and in front of the meter, while maximizing economic benefits for our community. There is also a clear understanding of the need for education and grassroots mobilization as keys to moving policies at the municipal and state levels, and though the group's expressed interest on a day-to-day level is on local projects and policies, we are also committed to contribute towards the statewide administrative and legislative objectives that will facilitate those projects in our community and in others across the state. For example, we have been following the development of a new solar incentive program, and have spoken in favor of a strong and equitable incentive structure at state agency forums soliciting community input, because we recognize the impact it could have on our local aspirations. We also have the ear of municipal government, as illustrated by a soon-to-be published joint op-ed piece in local media with one of our groups and the City Manager of Worcester, and will be advocating for such policies as green municipal aggregation, anaerobic digestion etc. in coming months and years.

4. How are you ensuring that your committee is truly representative of the local community and addressing the identified needs of the local population? We are working hard to ensure maximum diversity and community buy-in with this project, targeting base-building groups with a membership that has been historically excluded from decisions about energy policy and from the benefits of clean energy, despite their paying for benefits and bearing unfair burdens as a result of existing energy systems. Looking ahead, we hope to hire staff from among the membership of local base-building groups, and/or from those historically marginalized communities, in order to more effectively mobilize their peers.

5. Please share how your group is coordinating with other regional or statewide groups to ensure that you are aligning with current initiatives and maximizing existing resources. WCEA is supported by and allied with various organizations with their ear to the ground on the state of current initiatives and policy fights, such as 350 Central MA, Clean Water Action and Acadia Center. We hope to contribute to those broader efforts in ways that leverage our unique geographic and political advantages, as well as our vision for a community that truly lives up to its moniker as "the green heart of the Commonwealth."

7. Please attach two letters of support from individuals or organizations that would be participating in the regional committee effort. The letter should indicate support both for the formation of the committee as well as the coordinator organization's role. Attached.

PLANNED & BUDGET ACTIVITIES:

1. Please describe your planned committee activities for the year. While our consensus process and formative stage of growth have not as yet allowed us to flesh out the full array of priorities for the year, we will be developing them over the next month or two. However, among the projects we are already incubating are a community microgrid based in the Main South neighborhood- a predominantly low-income community of color- as well as a nascent effort towards community shared solar and advocacy for green municipal aggregation and expanded net metering. In addition, we hope to follow major policy developments at the State House, Department of Public Utilities, Department of Energy Resources etc, and contribute to swaying key decisions in favor of a level playing field for clean energy, including by advocating with our elected representatives. The same is true at the municipal level, where we are cultivating a solid working relationship with key City staff, including City Manager Ed Augustus, energy manager John Odell, progressive city councilors and others, as well as various players across the regional economic development landscape, as the City moves to build out a profile as a leader in the clean energy world. These relationships can help us bring a new set of voices to the policy debates, which in turn we hope will create a more favorable environment for us as we move forward with implementing our local vision. But we also are cognizant of the fact that without a strong foundation, we will not be able to meet these goals, so we intend to devote significant time in the first half of the year to developing our organizing skills, understanding of issues and capacity, and conducting outreach activities to build an independent local base, in addition to seeking out funds to support our work.

2. Please attach a full budget for the year including other sources of income that will support this project. Attached.

3. How will the group measure the impact of its work? The WCEA is interested in effective advocacy and organizing towards goals that are extremely time sensitive for our communities and the planet. We will use half-yearly internal meetings to review progress against our goals, and also solicit input from a set of local allies with considerable stature from a range of progressive constituencies, on how we can improve effectiveness. We also are committed to the MA Clean Energy Center's timeline and process for building a community microgrid (assuming we are selected for an assessment in coming months), which provides an external accountability mechanism. But the main measure of our impact will be in mobilizing our neighbors to stand up for our goals, and we aim to activate at least 100 local residents to work on our agenda during this first year.

4. What additional trainings or resources would be particularly helpful for your committee network? In addition to the popular education trainings mentioned above, connections with other groups around the country working to bridge economic and cultural barriers to local energy and climate organizing would be most welcome, once we have our feet firmly planted as an organization.

If you have any questions regarding the application or the application process, please contact Grassroots Fund staff at 603-905-9915 / partner@grassrootsfund.org.

Worcester Community Energy Alliance

Projected Budget: January-December 2017

EXPENSES

Rent for shared workspace at Worcester Clean Tech Incubator	\$225/mo x 12 mos = \$2700
Staff time (24 hours/wk @ \$17/hour among two staff)	\$21,216
Internship (16 hours/wk at \$14/hr)	\$11,200
Stipends for event MCs, translation, interpretation etc.	\$1500
Copies, banners and other materials	\$700
Advertising in local media	\$400
Website	\$500
 TOTAL	 \$38,216

INCOME

MA Clean Energy Center Internship Program	\$11,200
In-kind donations from Worcester Academy	\$200
In-kind donations from Clean Water Action	\$200
MPF Jumpstart grant via NEGEF	\$5000
 TOTAL	 \$16,600

SHORTFALL: \$21,616

We hope to apply successfully for grant funding from other foundations to make up this shortfall.



Spanish, English, Vietnamese interpretation at Energy Forum



Worcester Community Energy Alliance at Forum



To: New England Grassroots Environmental Fund

Re: Letter of Support for the formation of the Worcester Community Energy Alliance

Date: 12/1/2016

Dear Sir or Madam:

It is with enthusiasm and confidence that I write in support of the Worcester Community Energy Alliance (WCEA) as it seeks to formalize its status in efforts to increase its capacity to pursue critical matters of sustainable energy in the Worcester County region and beyond.

Worcester Academy has taken a strategic approach to public-private partnerships, civic engagement, and community collaboration in pursuit of shared sustainability goals. Such initiatives have included one of the earliest and largest solar PV installations in the city of Worcester during the first round of state solar policy, and most recently execution of a solar net metering purchase agreement with PV projects throughout Worcester County scheduled to produce 90% equivalency of campus electricity consumption. Further in my role as sustainability director at Worcester Academy, I have worked collaboratively with members of the informal WCEA group along with other community stakeholders, to lobby and directly engage state elected officials in successful pursuit of lifting the net metering cap and preserving the integrity of planned solar projects across the state. The Academy also collaborated with the WCEA last October to host a community energy forum to dialogue and address issues of energy justice and sustainability.

During these grassroots initiatives I've had the opportunity to work with Alex Papali, who through his work with Clean Water Action has a well-established relationship and ability for engaging local Worcester constituents to best serve the interests of the community, including the pursuit of critical clean energy policy goals. With its demonstrated capacity for community engagement, energy strategy planning, and policy advocacy, Clean Water Action is ideally suited to serve as the coordinator organization for the Worcester Community Energy Alliance. The WCEA has a solid vision to pursue a microgrid project in the marginalized Main South neighborhood of Worcester, a shared community solar project, and, perhaps most importantly, deeper scaled-up grassroots organizing for truly transformational local and state energy policies. Funding from the Mass Power Forward campaign would provide vital support for the WCEA to begin establishing self-sufficient resources in pursuit of said aims.

Best,

Mike Carroll
Director of Sustainability
Worcester Academy
mike.carroll@worcesteracademy.org

WGIIHC

in association with *Oak Hill CDC, Dismas House, Jeremiah's Inn, Worcester Common Ground, Abby's House, Friendly House, Our Fathers House – Fitchburg, The Bridge of Massachusetts, Latin American Health Alliance, Advocates, Veterans Inc.*

www.wglihc.org

Dear friends at New England Grassroots Environment Fund -

We are writing in support of Worcester Community Energy Alliance and their work around a microgrid project, community solar, and policy change both statewide and locally. We believe that their work, as spearheaded by Clean Water Action and the formation of this new committee, will augment the important environmental advocacy work being done by such organizations as Regional Environmental Council, and our own work in low-income housing communities at Worcester Green Low Income Housing Coalition.

As we are New England's second largest city, this effort is important to harness the strengths of multiple leaders to generate enthusiasm and support for a new vision of a clean energy economy. Anticipating potential setbacks at the federal level, we believe strong local environmental organizations that utilize their strength to build green communities are the logical response. I have attended many of their meetings, as have our members and staff, and we believe Worcester Community Energy Alliance is an important new addition to the green energy work being accomplished in greater Worcester.

As we have built solar projects in central Massachusetts and guided multiple organizations into everything from community based solar to high efficiency furnaces, we see the potential of their plans on solar. As fellow advocates in the struggle for progressive solar policy in Massachusetts, we look forward to collaborating further as we enter 2017 looking to reinvigorate solar policy statewide. And as we seek support for our own advocacy around additional measures to reduce oil consumption by expanding the utility oil efficiency programs, and addressing the crippling drought impact on farms by facilitating California-style grey water systems, we will look to such allies to bolster our goals.

Recently, we have been meeting 1-1 with low-income housing providers in Worcester, helping them review their energy portfolios, and accessing insulation, community solar, and more. During this process, we have learned more about what other communities are doing, particularly Burlington Vermont and their move to biomass, solar, and more to build a net zero community. Working with our new allies at Worcester Community Energy Alliance, we believe we too can move Worcester and communities of central Massachusetts into a more sustainable future!

Many thanks,

Dave McMahon
Worcester Green Low-Income Housing Coalition

Worcester Green Low Income Housing Coalition
PO Box 30125 Worcester, Massachusetts 01603