

Sustainable Energy Committee Minutes – July 13, 2012

Conference Room G - Town Hall

Committee Members Present:

Barbara Searle, Acting Chair
Richard Joyce
Suzy Littlefield
Steve Tolley
Scott Bender
Robert Cooper
Ellen Korpi
Molly Fairchild, Sustainable Energy Coordinator

Citizens' Speak: no one spoke

Minutes: 4/27/2012 and 6/29/12 approved

Membership Changes

Barbara Searle from Board of Selectmen is in her 5th year as a Selectman, and was previously on the Advisory Committee for three years, was the chair of the Historical Society, on the Community Preservation Committee, and participated in the time-of-use pilot offered by the Municipal Light Plant. The Selectmen decided that rather than one of their staff, a Selectman should be a member of the SEC at this time.

Steve Tolley from the Facilities Department at Babson College coordinates the colleges resources and technical abilities to address Babson's goal of becoming Carbon Neutral by 2050 (as part of ACUPCC, the American College and University President Climate Commitment). In the last 6 years, Babson has reduced its carbon footprint by more than 20% and has recently begun purchasing Wellesley Renewable Energy for 5% of its electricity needs.

Ongoing Project- Wellesley Renewable Energy / GPC Designation

Ms. Korpi reported that the planning continues for a media event to celebrate the designation of Wellesley as a Green Power Community by the EPA and honor the colleges and other participants and supporters of the **POWER TO CHOOSE** campaign. Either the Lower Falls bridge or Town Hall are being considered for the event. The Committee agreed to have the Selectmen to decide the location for the two EPA Green Power Community signs.

RGI Funds From Wellesley that Fund Other Communities

Mr. Joyce described how Wellesley electric customers contribute an estimated \$200,000 annually to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGI) Funds, with about 20% distributed to the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), and 80% distributed to the Investor Owned Utilities (IOU) with none currently returned to the MLPs communities. An amendment to a larger bill that would have returned at least part of these funds to communities such as Wellesley was defeated by the State House of Representatives several weeks ago. Municipal Light Plant communities may consider introducing their own legislation to deal with this matter in the next legislative session.

Municipal Energy Use

Ms. Fairchild reported that she is completing Building Progress Reports for kWhs and therms for FY12, with an updated report based on informal feedback from Facilities Maintenance and the Library. She is continuing to work with the Library, also using information from the GroundedPower real-time electric data to develop, step-wise initiatives to achieve their reduction goal. The Town data could also be used with the Energy Star Portfolio software used to designate EPA EnergyStar-rated buildings.

SEC Structure

Mr. Joyce recommended that the Sustainable Energy Coordinator who currently reports to two different individuals, one at the MLP and the other in the Selectmen's Office, should report to the Chair of the SEC. The committee approved. Mr. Joyce will submit the official change.

Mr. Joyce nominated Ellen Korpi to be the new Chair of the SEC, Suzy Littlefield seconded. Ms. Korpi was unanimously elected Chair.

Ms. Korpi reported that she plans for the SEC to work in subgroups on initiatives, meeting just once per month as the full committee, but with working groups meeting more frequently. SEC meetings will be held on the first Friday of each month, starting in September.

Prioritizing Initiatives for FY13

Municipal Goal: 20% Reduction

Municipal Energy Use:

Ms Searle emphasized the importance of municipal energy savings that will benefit all the Town departments. Ms. Fairchild added the need to address behavior, technology and facilities maintenance as part of energy reduction.

Next Step - Mr. Tolley and Mr. Joyce agreed to form the Municipal Energy Use working group.

Town-wide Goal: 10% Reduction

1) POWER TO CHOOSE

Mr. Joyce reported that there will be a 5% rate decrease this fall. Ms Korpi reported that the next phase of the campaign will be designed around the rate decrease. Wellesley now purchases more than 4% kWh of Town use as Renewable, with SunLife now purchasing *Wellesley Renewable Energy*.

Next Step – Ms. Korpi and Mr. Joyce will form a small working group to design the next phase of the campaign.

2) Solarize Wellesley

Ms Korpi reported that Sustainable Wellesley leaders Quentin Prideaux and Jessica Langerman have expressed interest in researching the feasibility of a group-purchase system for solar installations, similar to how Solarize MA is conducting its campaign in communities served by investor-owned utilities. Mr. Joyce added that one approach might be to join with one or more other MLP communities to create this program

Next Step – Mr. Joyce will meet with Mr. Prideaux and Ms. Langerman to begin coordination of the research phase of the project

3) Energy Audits Leading to Action

It was agreed that one way to increase conservation measures in Town would be to re-engineer the energy audit product that the MLP now offers rate-payers for free. Mr. Joyce suggested considering sources of funding, including the current funds allocated to the appliance rebate program by the MLP. Ms Fairchild indicated that GreenNeedham has just completed a successful audit program working with NextStepLiving.

Next Step – Mr. Bender will form a Working Group to commence the research phase of this project, to determine what design of energy audit is most effective in getting the building owner to take sustainable steps and then what the feasibility is for providing this product to rate-payers in Wellesley, whether for free or for some charge.

4) Outreach to Merchant Community

It was agreed that supporting conservation measures by the commercial community might be structured in a manner that would benefit both these rate-payers and the Town's conservation efforts.

Ms Fairchild described a model used in Europe to encourage energy conservation and efficiency in rental properties (commercial and residential) where landlords/ property owners invest in energy improvements paid for by increased rent payments an increase that is still less than the energy savings realized by the occupants each month, with net savings to all.

Next Step – Ms. Fairchild will research conservation initiatives that other utilities have provided to their commercial customers. Ms. Searle will coordinate the Working Group that will meet with some landlords to explore whether a mutually beneficial program might be possible.

5) Vampire Electric Use

This project would target the public elementary schools and would provide a lesson at Halloween on “vampire electric use”, technology in the home that uses power unnecessarily when not being used (eg computers not shut down at night). Students would have a homework assignment to inventory vampire electric use in their home.

Next Step - Ms Littlefield will coordinate this Working Group. Ms. Korpi will seek to recruit the volunteer organization Green Schools to provide support to this Working Group.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:00 a.m.

Next meeting: Friday September 7th, 2012 7:45-9:00 a.m.