

Energy Committee Meeting Minutes
May 2nd, 2022 7:00pm
Old schoolhouse common & zoom

Members In attendance: Ellen Keene, Rich Phillips, Nick Seifert, Anne Miller
Public:

Agenda:

- Public Comment
 - None
- Announcements
 - Energy Fair at Middlesex, Rich is going. Contact if wanting to carpool.
 - Upper Valley Virtual Local Energy Action Showcase - virtual event, May 12th, 7-8:30pm.
 - Rich attended Better Building by Design conference. A few comments from the event.
 - On Weatherization the total cost can be put on the power bill. This would mean no up-front cost for people, just offsetting their bill. Power companies looking into this as part of their "Tier 3" obligations. Beginning as a pilot program in southern VT. This is an Efficiency VT program in collaboration with utilities (or someone?)
 - Ground source heat pumps are being resurrected to some degree. There are some good federal incentives for these, as well as state incentives.
- Approval of Previous minutes
 - Minutes motioned and approved.
- Agenda Modifications
 - Zoning changes may be
- Business
 - Grant and other funding opportunities
 - None at this time.
 - Legislative updates
 - Rich discussed a budget item from the legislature, H552 and Weatherization have made it to the budget bill. Money may be available to municipalities to convert fossil resources to more renewable sources. Marshfield has done a lot here already, so not a lot of opportunities for the town. There may be opportunities for the village, like solar.
 - Bob gave an update. Clean heat standard bill made it out of the Senate last week. They left out an amendment about sources of "green" and "clean" sources, like biomass or biogas. The bill does not go into effect until 2025, and the legislature has to review it in 2024 before it goes into effect.
 - Community solar group updates
 - The next meeting is Wednesday the 11th. Contact Rich, Ellen, Wes or John for more information. 6pm at the Old Schoolhouse Common.

- Wes helped to find a website developer to help them out with building the website. Wes put John in touch with this person, and they've begun to talk.
- Rich has been looking for locations to install the PV array. So far no luck, but he has some additional sites in mind. To build a 150kW system would be around \$500k. This is the amount they would need to finance.
- John has suggested a possible funding source, which Rich is also investigating. TBD where this goes as of today. The maximum amount from this program would be \$250k, and it may be as a grant or loan.
- Rich is starting to look into possible funding opportunities for low income and renters. Rich has some contact with the USDA who can likely help/advise on possible opportunities.
- Rich has a letter drafted to the selectboard about this project to describe the interactions with the energy committee.
 - Rich has asked Nick to review this letter and give any feedback.
- Ellen has been focused on the outreach. She has been using some of the tools that Rich provided. She is thinking about the future and how to plan this for the coming months.
- Marshfield Municipal solar
 - Nick discussed solar options with the selectboard. They eliminated the option of upgrading the existing trackers due to some maintenance concerns. Becoming an offtaker is one option, and Bobbi was going to find out from the Town's legal counsel if this can be done. The other option the selectboard was interested in was putting solar on a roof, or ground mount.
- ARPA Funding recommendations (from energy committee to Selectboard)
 - Nick reviewed the list on the town website, as well as the brainstorming list from last time.
 - Nick recommends an electric stove for the OSC kitchen.
 - Ellen recommends the OSC heat pump for cooling, and ventilation upgrade. She is also in favor of the town speed sign, as well as the Marshfield Dam emergency notification system.
 - Anne recommended an air-source walk-in cooler for the food shelf.
 - Rich recommends heat pumps to use for air conditioning, instead of the window units. He does not recommend adding a ventilation system for the OSC, there isn't much gain. There are at least three window AC units that could be replaced, and possibly add to the library as well? TBD.
 - LED light replacement at the OSC makes sense, Rich thinks 20-30% less energy use.
 - Nick asked how much information we should provide with these suggestions. Rich feels we should get at least some an estimate of the cost, but not the payback.

- Nick volunteered to look into the cost of replacing the stove.
- Rich is talking to Lloyd's Plumbing and Heating about water. He will also ask them about heat pump AC units to replace window units.
- Anne is going to reach out to Efficiency VT about an estimate for the walk in freezer.
- Ellen is willing to give Jacob Gouge about the cost of replacing the fluorescent bulbs with LED bulbs.
- Goal is to have those reasonable / rough estimates to Nick by the 16th.
- Plainfield updates
 - Bob gave a brief update.
- Zoning change discussion
 - Wes brought up that some zoning changes could be considered to promote energy or other appropriate items.
 - Rich thought that the existing town plan had enough in it to establish zoning guidance around renewables.
 - Anne reminded us about updates to the town plan related to the enhanced energy planning updates. She believes the town plan was never ratified with these updates. This was confirmed through discussion and review of current town documents.
 - More discussion needed on this, adding to the agenda for next time.
- Tentative agenda for June:
 - Public Comments
 - Announcements
 - Agenda Updates
 - Approve previous minutes
 - Business
 - Plainfield updates
 - Grants / Funding / Legislative updates
 - Community solar group updates
 - Marshfield Municipal solar
 - ARPA funding updates
 - Town Plan / Enhanced Energy Plan / Zoning discussion
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