

## Windham Energy Commission Minutes January 8, 2013

### Present

Mike Altshul, Grace Adams, Corey Krohn, James Finger, Chris Vials, Jean De Smet

### Quest

Kate Donnelly

### Action Steps

- recruit people for energy commission (mostly Jean)
- make door hangers for N2N canvassing (Kate)
- look into renting a billboard for N2N (Kate)
- talk to Schmidt at CEFIA for using the Community Innovations Grant money for a solar array in a highly public place (Jean)
- get quote on solar lamps for Windham, to be paid for with our 4100 N2N points (Kate)

### Discussions

**Issue of Quorum.** We discussed our persistent frustrations over the issue of quorum, and what to do about it. The issue of why we needed quorum was raised. Jean clarified that because we are a Commission, we must have quorum, and being a Commission (rather than a mere advisory board) is good for us because we get more authority from that status (namely, we have the power to allocate funds without approval from the Town Council).

It was decided that the easiest way to resolve our quorum issue would be to recruit new members. Two people filled out applications on the spot (graciously provided by James). They are: Mike Altshul and Corey Krohn.

In addition, Jean will try to recruit the following: Mary Lou Devivo, Robin Gazza of Scotland Rd, Michelle Perkins, Alex Geshick.

There are 7 seats on the Commission and 2 alternate seats in addition. The quorum is always 4 Commission members (it's not a percentage of members)

**Meeting Times.** From here on out, we decided to meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> **Mondays** of each month. Our next meeting will be Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. Subsequent meetings will be February 11<sup>th</sup> and February 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Neighbor to Neighbor.** The biggest part of the meeting was a discussion of N2N and steps to improve HES sign-ups. Kate reported that 17 people attended the recent N2N workshop at Eastern, and 5 signed-up. Corey helped out with this. All in all, Windham is behind other towns in HES sign-ups, even though other towns do the same outreach as we do. Several noted that in the past, targeting renters goes nowhere.

Kate will be talking on John Murphy's radio show tomorrow at 3:15 about HES and Energy Efficiency.

The following possibilities were discussed:

- Identify homes that need insulation simply by driving around our neighborhoods and recording addresses (or asking neighbors). It's best to do so after a snow storm. Ice dams are a good indicator, but not an absolute indicator (as Corey mentioned, ice dams could also be caused by clogged gutters). If you can see snow on the rafters but missing on the joice, it's a good sign that they need insulation too
- Kate is working on door hangers for canvassing
- James suggested contacting people on the waiting list for housing rehabilitation
- follow up with the Town TV guy
- renting a billboard (Bridge Street?)
- putting up flyers, particularly in restaurants
- articles in local papers/town newsletter
- Kate also asked Committee members to talk to their neighbors and asking if they'd allow their homes to be photographed as examples of either good/poor insulation
- door-knocking. Chris emphasized this as a strategy, stressing it would be particularly useful if combined with Solarize CT outreach, and if each of us knocked on the doors of our own neighbors

**Community Innovations Grant Program.** We have \$5000 that we still need to decide how to use. It has to be used for renewable energy or to support public awareness for renewable energy. We agreed that the best use of the money would be to buy a single solar array in a highly visible, public place. Perhaps on Bridge Street. Jean will talk to Schmidt at CEFIA for more information on this.

**C-Pace.** James said that the Town is moving forward with this program. It's a benefit assessment for commercial property owners in which they qualify for low-interest loans through CEFIA for capital improvement related to energy efficiency. The benefit assessment is made before the mortgage is signed.

**Clean Energy Communities Municipal Pledge.** We agreed to table this for now. This is because the Town will not qualify for the incentives attached to the program until April, when N2N runs out. The "pledge" is for the Town to reduce its energy consumption by 20% by 2018 (the start date of this is movable, 2008 at the earliest).

Town set aside \$450,000 for energy efficiency and has spent this money. To gauge how much energy the town has spent, however, we would need to do benchmarking.

**Solarize CT.** We got the grant! Energy Commission members will be receiving info from CEFIA soon. The "community" (i.e., us and Mansfield) will need to review installer proposals on January 31<sup>st</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup>.

