

Windham Energy Commission Minutes February 11, 2013

In Attendance: Kate Donnelly, James Finger, Jean De Smet, Grace Adams, James Gardner, Corey Krohn, Mike Altshul

Minutes approved for January 28, September 11 and August 28

MOTION: (proposed by Jean). We will write a letter to Neil Beets asking that the Town increase money allocated to energy improvements from \$165,000 to \$200,000 (motion carried)

Joe Gardner's Report on Benchmarking

- Joe went to a workshop in October for benchmarking; it's easy; just need someone for data input
- **The Library.** he's already done benchmarking for the library. Joe reported that we saved 10,000 Kwh in 10 month period (\$14,000) over the past year. We're currently paying 14 cents per Kwh
- his data was supplied by the utilities (Yankee Gas owns pipes that we buy from; we pay our electricity bill to CL&P); Joe worked up the data himself
- we had put insulation on the library roof 2 years ago; this was done with a grant at no cost to taxpayers; he found that we have a 13% reduction in gas bill for the library; hard to say how much money we're saving from improvements alone because we switched gas suppliers
- for benchmarking, data all has to be converted into BTUs, as per EPA guidelines
- **Other Improvements.** senior center converted to gas; saves us \$2000/year
- Corey: there's a new CL&P software program that is much easier to use (new version coming out in June); provides a scorecard for each building; Joe can just email his contact from ICF to ask her; Corey can check in to see if it's available
- Jean: a possible use for our grant money is to hire someone to input data
- Joe: we're putting in a new condensing boiler this spring in the safety complex
- Joe gave out a handout showing our various municipal energy projects to date: solar panels on municipal buildings; vending machine sensors; improvements to the Kramer Building; energy efficient lights at the Public Works Building and R-30 insulation installed in the ceiling; improvements to the Safety Complex; installed an interior sliding door in the Town Hall to stop outflow of heat and cool air
- **Town Hall.** We can possibly replace the windows in Town Hall ballroom with a grant
- boilers downstairs in Town Hall are rotted out; grant eligible from NE Utilities pays for 80% of particular extraneous costs.
- rare birds (swifts) are nesting in Town Hall chimneys which makes energy improvements complicated here
- Jean: wants to install insulation above the ceiling in the Town Hall ballroom

- **Museums.** Thread Museum and other museum are huge energy suckers; trying to get museum to take ownership of buildings but it's not clear they'll do it; meter is currently under their name, though
- RCIP (Reserve for Capital Improvement Planning); many energy improvements come from this plan

Money for Energy Commission.

- If we ask for a budget (of \$5K), we need to ask for it right away; we would have to come up with a plan for how we'll spend it; we could use it for marketing, mailing, training, workshops, infrared solar imaging camera (Mike's plan); hire someone for benchmarking?
- if we wanted infrared solar imaging camera, this could come out of the RCIP budget
- Mike: we could make neighborhood maps

Corey's Report from Middletown Meeting

- Corey went to a regional workshop in Middletown dealing with HES and CEFIA related programs and outreach
- attendees from other towns reported they had success with HES; one successful strategy included a letter from First Selectman to residents; they posted a copy of letter on task force website and solicited sponsorship for the letter, giving sponsors advertising space at bottom of letter
- yard signage was another strategy; one wealthier community also asked people to donate solar panels; church coffee hours was another outreach plan; one community had a high school green energy club and used them to distribute information; like Windham, other communities also made a 20% pledge; another outreach plan included the Energize CT.com clean energies communities dashboard online
- there is free portfolio manager software for benchmarking available from the EPA; new version for June 2013; you can work with CL&P to get previous data; ICF noted the possibility of getting free benchmarking
- other programs: for financial incentives, SBEA and SBA; Energy Opportunity; C-PACE; ZREC/LREC program
- REC = renewable energy credit (zero vs. low); LREC example is a fuel cell; 1 REC = 1 megawatt; awards available for saving RECs
- Mary Lou DeVivo donates a lot; we could ask her

Neighbor to Neighbor and Solarize (Kate)

- began a discussion of time allocation: HES or Solarize?
- she created her own door hanger for N2N
- we could put possibly our information into Water/Gas Bills
- we voted to cancel our table at the chocolate festival
- contractors will soon do their own outreach for Solarize
- an (additional?) contractor named Next Step Living will do the HES visits from here on out

- Kate passed out list of outreach ideas for Solarize
- this Wednesday, Joe Gardner, Corey, and Kate will be participating in interviews for contractors for the Solarize CT program
- we're meeting around February 21 to prepare for the launch
- we decided on two Solarize CT launches: one in each community