

TOWN OF WINDHAM
ENERGY COMMISSION
Minutes of Monday March 24, 2014

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. Those present were: Jean de Smet - Chair, Grace Adams, Elizabeth Ostwald, Corey Krohn, and Alex Girshick. Also present was James Finger -staff; guests included Erin O'Neill and Addison Weinstein of Next Step Living, and Terri Eickel from IREJN.

Citizens and Delegations - None

Minutes: The minutes of the March 10, 2014 meeting were not complete.

Thermal Imaging Project: Elizabeth Ostwald gave an update, reporting that according to Sagewell there 185 inquiries with 29 people who have expressed interest in the solar assessment; this was due in large part to the letters that were sent to residents. The goal is to reach ten percent of households to reduce energy by 20%. A question arose for people who are not computer savvy, to get access to their image information - can we send them pictures or come up with another way for people to access the information - like through Next Step Living. Liz explained that if 200 people expressed interest for their thermal image report, maybe half would sign up for an energy evaluation(HES), and then maybe half of those would complete the energy audit; then about half of those would actually do the upgrades. Beyond that - a smaller percentage would do solar installations.

More discussion ensued about goals, and whether the ten percent was reasonable - need to contact Tim D'Sousa on what's reasonable. James said he felt it was a reasonable goal. He added that he's taken a few calls lately from people who are not computer savvy, and just need some help to get them the information. In a few cases, he said he referred them to Next Step Living for more help. A general discussion ensued as to how many people have difficulty getting the information and give up. Liz commented that we're just taking what Sagewell gives us to market their existing program - we're not paying them to re-design it. James added that this is a very short program - until June 9th for the Solar contract, but as long as it's useful for us to use for promoting the HES program. Ideally, it would be good if Sagewell could offer to mail the images to the callers, or bring a computer to the workshop to show people their images on-the-spot. The Chair reported that Sagewell has reached agreement with Astrum (Solar contractor) on a fixed price of \$3.50/watt.

Guests: Terri Eickel from the Inter Religious Eco-Justice Network - IREJN explained that she does outreach to religious groups, She said that her mission is to go to various religious groups to make the case for taking care of the planet from a moral ethical, and spiritual perspective. So when talking about goals of trying to get people to sign on to make a difference, this is a way to reach people who respect each other and can work

together. Then she said she can present some solutions for people to reduce their carbon footprint. It helps to meet with the congregation to find out who is really passionate about it, who could call their fellow members to talk about this. The Temple B'nai has a Green Committee. St. Joseph's Catholic Church signed on for N2N, but we weren't able to follow thru. There are many protestant congregations as well, some of which will need bi-lingual information. Terri will bring a translator, unless we have one available. Terri will contact us re: pastors to reach out to. The Chair thanked her, and said that we will find local contacts to refer for this effort.

Erin O'Neill and Addison Weinstein of Next Step Living advised of their efforts at Stop & Shop, and then spoke about their outreach efforts to banks and businesses - mainly focused on their employees or staff. Some have newsletters, and this may be a way to reach more people. The Chair mentioned Liberty Bank, and the Savings Institute Bank - both of which are local banks - although Liberty has two branches here; but she offered to add her name to the e-mail to the Bank Branch managers to help promote it.

Next, the Commission discussed plans for the Solar Workshop scheduled for April 9th, and preparations. Erin O'Neill explained that they would develop signup sheets and have them available for people to fill out at the event. They would also contact other energy contractors/vendors to set up tables to discuss products. Liz explained that Sagewell wanted to know what they should discuss at the event, and do we want to allow vendors to come and have tables along the side?

The consensus was - YES, to have a full range of services offered to promote energy conservation. Another topic was whether to include a presentation on mini-splits - YES; and if we should have a signup sheet to keep track of what people are interested in - or just let them talk directly to vendors.

Alex - suggested having a signup sheet as they enter, then we could find out why they came - then they could walk around and talk with whomever they wanted to find out more information. All agreed that we need announcements and posters, and - along with Astrum, we want to encourage other vendors to come. Also, CEFIA (Clean Energy Finance Investment Authority) wants to send someone to talk about financing.

The Chair asked about the resource information that Neighbor to Neighbor collected as they gave it to the Commission on a compact disc; Alex said he had it, and would deliver to James. The Chair said she would send the announcements to all the local print media, Cable and Radio Station, and will share with the Town Manager for him to include in his weekly update. Further discussion brought up the idea of outreach through the schools, but the Chair said that Sagewell didn't think it was worthwhile as the kids typically don't bring the announcement home.

Post Solarize: The Chair announced that CEFIA sent us a letter in January offering to help with workshops, banners, posters, mailings, and coordination with existing campaigns. We should take them up on this, as they have a list of people who inquired about the Solarize program last year - but didn't participate.

Next discussion turned to the Energy Commission's relationship with NSL. The Chair commented that we may need to have a formal relationship with Next Step Living, and possible funding. Erin O'Neill and Addison Weinstein of Next Step Living explained that they have standard language that we could use. Some discussion ensued about funds or points collected, and the use of these points. We gave our points to WAIM, but they didn't use them as it was too much trouble. All agreed that the Energy Commission would rather collect a referral fee that could be used to fund other outreach efforts. Erin explained that NSL typically pays \$25 for each completed HES.

NSL also explained that they would be setting up community outreach efforts at Stop & Shop and the Willimantic Co-op, then trying to contact local banks to reach their employees to participate.

The deadline for the Solar incentive was set as June 9th, with the understanding it could possibly be extended until mid-July.

Clean Energy Communities: Benchmarking – A date was set to learn how to do the data entry, and James Finger and Grace Adams will attend. Kramer Gym was selected for the On-site Assessment. We need to work on the Municipal Action Plan immediately.

Micro-grid: The Board of Finance approved the project, with 2 against. Melissa Everett - our Consultant at DERP and Jean wrote a Fact Sheet, which was sent to the Board of Finance, the Town Council, and the Board of Education. The Chair asked to have this posted on our website. Town Meeting is on April 15th, at 6:30. We need to bring people out to vote. DEEP will conduct a four part microgrid educational webinar series in the next two weeks.

Other outreach and Marketing opportunities: Dollars and Sense Day—HES-IE vendor New England Smart Energy Group will attend, and we are welcome to join them. Earth Day at QVCC is April 22, 11-2, NSL will participate, and we are welcome to join them.

ConnDOT's Clean vehicle grant: forwarded to various departments.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Jean de Smet, Chair, and James Finger