



Town of Barnstable Renewable Energy Commission

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Tel:
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Chair:
Amanda Converse

Vice Chair:
Alison Alessi

Members:
Bob Franey
Doug Hempel
Tony Johnson
Vanessa Lavoie
Jeffrey Pimental
Jan Rapp
Jim Ruberti

Energy Coordinator:
Richard Elrick

Town Council Liason:
Frederick Chirigotis

Minutes of June 23rd, 2010

A meeting of the Renewable Energy Commission (REC) was held on June 23rd, 2010 at the West Barnstable Community Building, Small Conference Room, Route 149, West Barnstable, MA.

The meeting was called to order at 6:12PM by the Chair, Amanda Converse.

Commission members present: Amanda Converse, Alison Alessi, Doug Hempel, Jim Ruberti, Vanessa Lavoie, and Jan Rapp.

Council Liaison: none

Staff: Richard Elrick, Energy Coordinator

Public: none

Act on Minutes:

On a motion and second, the commission unanimously voted to approve the June 2, 2010 minutes as printed.

Announcements/Communications:

Richard Elrick wanted to bring the new Cape Light Compact electricity rates to the Commission's attention. These rates are going down again. Of particular note is that the 50% "Green" option from CLC is not much more than the current standard electric rate. For any households thinking about ways to go "green", this is one option that wouldn't cost a lot and would provide some incentive for additional renewable energy development. A 100% green option is also available. For more information, visit http://www.capelightcompact.org/documents/6.8.10consumernotificationwGREEN_000.pdf.

Richard also wanted to bring to the Commission's attention an event happening at Craigville Beach on Saturday, June 26th. A "Hands Across the Sand" event is being held to "making a literal line in the sand to say "no" to new offshore drilling and "yes" to clean energy. The event is being held at 11AM.

Staff Report:

David Anthony submitted an e-mail listing all the current renewable energy projects (large commercial and municipal) in the town. This spreadsheet is in draft form and still being worked on by David. He will provide a more finalized version of the document at a later date.

A brief discussion broke out that it would be nice to also get a listing of

residential renewable energy installations across the town and it was agreed that Richard and David would attempt to get that list using town records (ex., building and electrical permits).

Richard had several updates as Energy Coordinator. On the "Green Communities" front, Richard and the Growth Management Department will be presenting an overlay map for solar as-of-rights zoning to the Planning Board on Monday, June 28th. There are two zones included in the initial overlay. The first is the commercial district in and around Enterprise Road. The second is the land in and around the current Transfer Station.

Once approved by the Planning Board, the draft document would go before the Town Council at an upcoming meeting and have a first reading. After that, it would be scheduled for a public comment period at a future Town Council meeting. The Commission agreed to attend that meeting and/or draft a letter to be read into public comment in support of this zoning overlay.

Richard also let the Commission know that discussions continue on Barnstable hosting a "stretch" building code workshop some time this fall, possibly early in September. Yarmouth, Sandwich, Falmouth, and Bourne have shown early interest in being part of this forum. Enacting the "stretch" code is a requirement for the town to receive the Green Communities designation and open the door to grant monies for renewable energy projects.

The project at Barnstable's Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) is at the 50% design phase. A agreement in principal also appears to be in place to compromise on up-front funding. The contractor typically requires 90% up front, but because this is ARRA money, that requirement can't be met. The turbines have already been procured and should be on-site in August. The foundations should be poured the week of June 28th and require a one-month cure period. The solar array should begin construction in the September - November timeframe.

Old Business:

The commission then began a discussion of agenda items.

The commission agreed that breaking up into smaller sub-committees or working groups might serve to better focus the group on those topics previously discussed that were of most interest to them. Chair Amanda Converse suggested the following groups be formed:

- Outreach - Responsible for communications with Cape Light Compact and educational organizations.
- Government Relations - Responsible for interaction with the Town Council and other town boards and committees.
- Communication - Responsible for website coordination and development and press releases/communications.

The "Outreach" group would initially be Jim, Vanessa, and Doug (specifically related to educational opportunities within the schools). Jim expressed interest in leading this group.

The "Government Relations" group (working title to be discussed further) would

consist of Jan, Alison, and Amanda.

The "Communications" group would consist of Doug, Amanda, and Alison. Based on the work already done, Doug would probably lead this group.

Amanda agreed to communicate with the other members of the commission not present at the meeting and request that they select at least one working group on which to participate. No timetables or meeting schedules were set for these groups. Amanda also agreed to remind members that unexcused absences should be kept to a bare minimum and every effort should be made to contact the group if a member was going to miss a meeting.

Back on topic, each working group will work on a report/presentation for an upcoming meeting and setup a work plan and list of measurable objectives for the coming year.

Some discussion about outreach and communications spurred the group to talk about the website. Doug gave a brief summary of the initial design and made some suggestions about how to proceed with deployment. An initial work plan will be forwarded on to the town's IT department and web developer and then we'll continue to add onto the site until we're told to stop. The initial plan would be to ask for a site similar to that of the Sandy Neck board. It's still connected to the town site, but independent enough to allow for some flexibility in design and content. The commission would like to have a calendar that can be used to announce renewable energy events that the community might be interested in. Additional link ideas and suggestions were made and those will be incorporated into the plan.

Doug will proceed under the assumption that any request regarding website content made to the group via e-mail will be considered approved if he does not receive any negative feedback within 3 days.

A discussion was also made to see about providing some tips and calendar items to the "Barnstable This Morning" program. The commission will reach out to this group and see what kinds of things they might accept. The communications group will work on this.

New Business:

After an e-mailed request from an outside private contractor, an agenda item regarding what kinds of groups/organizations the Commission would like to have present at meetings was discussed.

Doug briefly discussed a presentation he went to on "Community Solar Gardens" and an interesting financing option they might offer to businesses, property owners, and subscribers.

Consensus seemed to be that the group was not ready for any outside presentations at this time and would focus on the working groups and getting some action plans in place from those groups. Getting some plans to work from and getting the website -- or at least the Commission's presence on the town website set up -- is an early priority.

Jim wanted to see NSTAR come in and speak with us and _____ agreed to contact _____ at NSTAR to see if they would be available for a brief presentation at an upcoming meeting.

Doug would like to invite members from other town's renewable/alternative energy commissions to attend one of our meetings and possibly provide some direction on what issues they tackled first and what worked and/or didn't work.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for July 21st at 5:30 back in Town Hall in Hyannis. Richard would check room availability, but we may need to use the main hearing room to avoid time conflicts with other groups using the Selectman's Conference Room.

Public Comment:

None.

Adjournment:

On a motion and second, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Hempel, REC Clerk