



Town of Barnstable Renewable Energy Commission

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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 August 31, 2010

A meeting of the Renewable Energy Commission (REC) was held on August 31st, 2010 in the Main Hearing Room at the Town Hall Building in Hyannis, MA.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30PM by the Chair, Amanda Converse.

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

Council Liaison: Fred Chirigotis.

Staff: Richard Elrick, Energy Coordinator and David Anthony, Chief Procurement Officer.

Guests: John Klimm, Town Manager; Kari Hewitt, Green Communities Consultant.

Public: Jim Kinsella, Barnstable Enterprise.

Act on Minutes:

On a motion and second, the commission unanimously voted to approve the July 21, 2010 minutes as printed.

Announcements/Communications:

None.

Green Communities Update:

Kari Hewitt, Technical Program Officer with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc, gave a presentation of how Barnstable is doing in its quest to get a "Green Communities" designation. A full summary of the presentation will be submitted with these minutes. In summary and based on the state's five (5) criteria:

1. As-of-rights Siting: Barnstable is working on getting As-of-Rights (AOR) solar overlay zoning districts (2) in place. (NOTE: As of the writing of these minutes, this overlay district was approved by the Zoning Board on September 13th, 2010 and will be discussed and voted on by the Town Council at an upcoming meeting.) Barnstable has chosen the "generation" option of this criteria.

2. Expedited As-of-Rights Permitting: This goes hand-in-hand with the AOR zoning listed above. If approved by Town Council, both of these Green Communities criteria will be met.

3. Energy Usage Baseline: The town is working on an energy baseline based on 2007 energy usage data.

4. Fuel-efficient Vehicle Purchases: A fuel efficient vehicle purchase program is currently being worked on within the town, spearheaded by the Energy Coordinator and the Town Manager's office.

5. Adoption of the "Stretch" Energy Building Code: This is another item that requires Town Council approval. A regional Stretch Code Workshop is planned for September 22nd, 2010 and is being sponsored by several towns, including Barnstable.

Richard Elrick had a question about the timeline for Criteria 3 and was told that the 5-year plan to meet the 20% energy reduction is dated from the year of the inventory (2007, in this case) and not from the date of application. This means that Barnstable only has 2 year to meet the 20% reduction, although we'll be credited for things that have already been done to reduce energy usage and improve efficiencies.

David Anthony asked about how school buses counted for/against the energy reduction since Barnstable uses a contracted service and the buses are not run by the municipality. The answer was that they do not need to be included in the inventory. Most cities and town do not own their own school bus fleet.

Doug Hempel asked how other towns have been using the grant monies. Ms. Hewitt answered that many towns were doing energy management and support contracts. Others were installing renewable energy on building. Many were also doing retrofits of existing buildings. The decision on how to spend the money has to be included on your grant application.

Amanda Converse asked about Stretch Code passage in other towns and how difficult it had been. Ms. Hewitt indicated that it was "the most unknown" criteria to the towns. Stretch Code workshops have been very helpful in making this process easier. "Education has been key," to the process. If more information is needed, additional sessions could be held with the Town Council, Building Department, etc.

Doug followed up with a question about the payback times for these energy efficiencies updates that are required by the Stretch Code. Ms. Hewitt didn't have any information immediately available, but provided a handout with more information. (This handout will be submitted with the final version of these minutes.)

Staff Report:

Richard began the Energy Coordinator's update with information about an electricity pricing forum that was held recently in Mashpee sponsored by Rep. Matt Patrick, Cape Light Compact, and others. Richard would like to hold a similar forum for Barnstable and would like to set a date in October at our next meeting.

The GIS system is now in place that shows where wind turbines in town could be

sited and what the height of that turbine could be. The system can also be used for siting of other large structures like water towers, cell towers, etc. This information is accessible in Richard's office and will possibly be made available at a public computer at a later date.

The Stretch Code joint forum will be held on September 22nd at the Sandwich Council on Aging, 270 Quaker Meetinghouse Road, Sandwich, MA., at 6PM. The agenda includes a brief Green Communities Discussion, a representative from DOER to discuss the code in detail, a HERS rater, and a builder to give brief presentations.

The WPCF is still in process but was delayed a bit getting NSTAR to perform their impact study. This took much longer than anticipated. Plan is still to have the turbine and solar installed by year's end, but this goal may not be met.

David will talk more about a ground mounted solar project at the Transfer Station and a rooftop municipal solar project in the works.

The website is coming along. Although not officially launched and still very much in the development stage, some basic information is available at: <http://town.barnstable.ma.us/energycommission/>.

Jan Rapp asked about advertising for the Stretch Code forum. Richard indicated that the plan is to work through the four town's energy commissions to get the word out. Richard has contacted the Cape's remodelers and homebuilders association. Some PSAs will also be issued. Alison Alles suggested contacting the Cape Cod Homebuilder's Association as well.

In answer to a question from Jan, David began to discuss some solar rooftop projects that may be coming in order to take advantage of the SREC market. Questions remain about the length of these contracts and who will own the systems at the end of these contracts. Some of the contracts stipulate that the systems will be removed at the end of the contract. There are financial incentives to get 5% of the project installed by year's end, but it's unclear what the 5% threshold really is. They all need to go through normal procurement.

Jan asked if these project would have to go through typical Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) procurement. David indicated that this will use the streamlined model and not require DCAM. This should speed things up if/when the town finds the right project. We already have a 15-year model contract in place with the Cape Light Compact that can be used.

Jan questioned the use of the PPA (power purchase agreement) at all. David answered that the town does not have the funds right now to put these projects on town buildings without partners. Municipalities can't take advantage of the tax credits and incentives. The town has to avoid companies that don't have the financial wherewithal to follow through on these projects. Cape and Vineyard Electric Coop (CVEC) is a current partner that David and Richard have been working with for "economy of scale" advantages, particularly related to the landfill project.

Jim Ruberti mentioned that the electric companies need to be told well in advance of these renewable energy projects. You need to get them in the pipeline to avoid

delays.

David said the municipality knows it has many assets -- large roofs -- but the projects need to take maximum advantage of what is available. Jim warned of a project in Quincy where they lost a lot of money by doing a PPA instead of doing it themselves. David understands the trade-offs and the issue is coming up with the money up front for the projects and getting them through the municipal process. Jim also suggested looking at leasing options instead of PPAs.

Tony Johnson let David and the group know that the 5% is typically a monetary benchmark, meaning 5% of the cost of the project must be spent. On the topic of companies who come in pressuring the town to act quickly, they are doing that because the federal tax grant has not been extended beyond the end of 2010 and will become a tax credit instead. He thinks that this is an indicator of a company that is too small and not someone the town would want to work with. Look for companies that want to take advantage of the tax credit and not the grants.

David indicated that the heating plant at the Barnstable Horace Mann Community Charter School (formerly Hyannis East) is on target for October 15th to convert to natural gas. This replaces a 60-year-old boiler and uses a more efficient fuel.

The FY2012 budget is being worked on. Two schools still use #4 heating oil. The town is trying to get out of those. Barnstable-West Barnstable Elementary (BWB) uses #2 heating oil (home heating oil). There have been discussions with NGRID to make that school dual-fuel. Should be more money coming in from CLC to upgrade blowers and motors to make the school systems more efficient.

Jim had a question about the high efficiency boilers at the Osterville school and if they can be used at another school. That school is being used by the Cape Cod Collaborative and is in use. They're very happy with the systems over there and those systems can't really be moved. The town wants to hold onto the property and keep it for school use in case there's a change in the Cape's demographics in the future.

Old Business:

Working Group reports were next. Jan discussed a letter drafted by the working group that will be sent to the historic boards in town to introduce the Renewable Energy Commission and what we're attempting to do with energy project in the town. A motion was made and seconded to approve the letter and have it sent to the historic committees in town. The motion passed unanimously. Richard suggested that the letter be updated so that a signature can be made. Amanda will sign the letter as the chairperson. Doug suggested that the REC website URL also be included in the letter.

Jan next suggested that someone from the REC be present and speak in favor of upcoming projects that come before the various historic boards in town.

Alison also had a document detailing goals and strategies for working with the historic and building boards. She will pass that document around for further review (and will be submitted with these minutes). One upcoming item would be for someone to speak at the upcoming Planning Board meeting discussing the As-

of-Rights zoning overlay district. Also was a suggestion to go before the Town Council in April and make a yearly report on the progress of the REC.

Alison also had a handout of the last several years of both residential and commercial renewable energy projects in town. Moving forward, the building department seems to have a good handle on keeping track of these types of projects (through building and electrical permits), but the historical data is pretty sparse before 2009.

There was a suggestion to setup a meeting with the building department and discuss how best to track these projects and perhaps get some more historical information.

Jim briefly discussed the meeting they previously had with the school board. There is a group of students that will be tasked with working with the Tony Lacina and the REC. They are working on getting a turbine at the school and a company has agreed to provide the initial site monitoring tower at no cost. This working group is just waiting for school to get back into full swing to find out how the REC can become more involved.

The Cape Light Compact will be at the September meeting and can provide information on their education programs and how the REC can take advantage of them. David noted that the 4th and 5th grade school seems to be a sweet spot for getting the students interested. He also named a couple of teachers at the high school who have a passion for these renewable energy technologies and suggested the REC get them involved.

Amanda asked if there was also a plan for reaching out to the business community in addition to the schools. David indicated that Maggie Downey from CLC would have information on how to do that and what they can do to help the REC make those contacts.

Amanda suggested additional contacts with business organizations. Jan suggested piggy-backing on school events to get the word out. Alison mentioned the upcoming Solar Open House event happening all over the Cape on Saturday, October 2nd.

Doug spoke quickly about the communications working group and the website. There was not much more to add. We need to get the site approved by the town's IT group and get it linked from the main Town of Barnstable page and through the committees and boards links. Next step will be filling in some of the holes with our Climate Action Plan, working group plans, case studies and other information.

New Business:

Alison discussed the Zero Waste Forum in Brewster that she attended. One interesting topic is that the largest renewable energy operation on the Cape is the "trash train" to SEMass. This contract with SEMass for waste-to-energy is expiring in 2015 and the cost-per-ton will be increasing from \$37 to \$85-90. Another point of interest is that the recycling rate in Barnstable is only 16% -- the lowest on the Cape and one of the lowest in the state. An interesting statistic presented at the meeting was the job creation that 10,000 tons of waste could

produce:

- 1 disposal job
- 8 recycling jobs
- 100 salvage jobs

The final recommendation would be to not eliminate local haulers, but to organize and consolidate the operations and efficiencies of these groups. Pay-as-you-throw programs could also be used to incentivize recycling.

Richard did note that while our statistic is bad, because so many residents of Barnstable use private haulers, our recycling rates are lower as a result. The pay-as-you-throw and mandatory recycling have come up for years and are very politically charged. He also thought it was a great idea for the REC to become involved in discussing these recycling and waste disposal issues.

Amanda suggested bringing Mark Els come speak to us about the DPWs efforts to increase recycling programs.

David mentioned that the school is a good example of a recycling success story. When the schools were converted from doing their recycling with a small dedicated group of students and teachers, to a single-stream recycling effort, the trash contractor had to bring in larger recycling containers than trash containers. Recycling seems to be second nature to children and students.

Amanda indicated that she spoke with the town attorney and that it's OK to invite vendors to the meeting providing they're not selling a product. They are free to give presentations.

Amanda also asked about removing a commission member and it's apparently never been done. Amanda needed the dates of the meetings and any unexcused absences. Richard indicated that he had only spoken to the missing commission member once early in the summer and that he indicated his interest in still serving but had had a family issue. Amanda will follow up.

A discussion was started about setting up a standard meeting date -- the first or third "something" of the month. Richard agreed to find an open meeting date on the calendar. Monday's were suggested and a follow-up check of the town calendar will be done.

Public Comment:

Jim Kinsella from the Barnstable Enterprise asked for the website address. (NOTE: While the head of the communications working group didn't know it off the top of his head, it is: <http://town.barnstable.ma.us/energycommission/>.)

He also asked the commission to introduce itself, and they did.

Adjournment:

On a motion and second, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Hempel, REC Clerk