

COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2016

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2016, at 7:30 pm at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center. Present were Committee members Jill Appel, Sue Felshin (clerk), Bill Lehr, Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Annie Moore, and Alan Whitney (chair); Gordon Brockway and Gilda Gussin were absent. Also present were Jan Aceti (CMLP Energy Conservation Coordinator), Pamela Cady (Concord/Carlisle Energy Manager), and resident Brian Foulds.

Shortened agenda

Due to inability to access the building, the Committee held an abbreviated meeting in the chill night air outside the lobby of the HWCC. In the apparent absence Ms. Cady, Ms. Aceti departed because all agenda items involving her were to be postponed to a future meeting.

Minutes

Mr. Lehr moved to approve the minutes of Jan. 12, as amended. Ms. Moore seconded. All **VOTED** in favor.

Ms. Felshin explained that she had made an error in the minutes of Jan. 12: she mistakenly omitted the agenda item for minutes, wherein the Committee voted to approve the minutes of Dec. 1 and Dec. 8. To repair the error, the Committee may vote to correct the minutes, and the minutes should then be corrected and refiled. Mr. Lehr moved to correct the minutes of Jan. 12, as amended. Ms. Appel seconded. All **VOTED** in favor.

Green Communities

Ms. Appel informed the Committee that Peregrine Consulting has available nominal grant funds that may be inserted in a competitive grant, for example, for Town facilities. She has received a list of small projects from John Snell of Peregrine Consulting which the Town could pursue. Regarding the Beede Center, no credit is available under Green Communities for additional energy usage due to expanded use of the facility.

Heat Pump Challenge update and Tufts project update

Mr. Hubbard-Nelson reported that the Challenge is on hold due to low oil prices but the collaboration with Tufts continues. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson and Mr. Brockway met with Prof. Hannemann and his students on February 17. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson is planning to take students on a field trip to Mitsubishi Demonstration Labs on March 28 to learn about heat pumps from one of their engineers.

Energy Fair possibilities

As noted at the previous meeting, the Town Manager supports the idea of the Committee hosting an Energy Fair comparable to the earlier Solar Fair and would make a small amount of money available to cover costs. Discussion included: The fair should be held in a year to allow sufficient time for planning. It should be a Sustainable Living Fair, which is both a broader theme and a more attractive name. The fair should offer actionable information, not theoretical information. There should be a master of ceremonies, and other work can be divided. The Committee should take the lead. The content should be practical, with neither films nor talks. The Committee could invite Bernie Jenkins and Deb Stoessel to advise the Committee based on their experience organizing an earlier sustainability fair in Concord. Some suggested topics for the fair were: Smart Meters; solar cars; quiet, low impact lawn care.

Position on Town Warrant articles

Mr. Lehr reported: The Select Board approved a charge for an energy task force for which funding is available, with a six-month term, and with positions expanded to include two members at large; no

members have been appointed yet. In light of this, the expectation is that Article 46 (Request to Create a Net Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions Goal, Task Force, Funding & Plan) will not be moved by Mothers Out Front. Also, Article 44, on studying time-of-use rates, may be modified or not moved. [Ms. Cady arrived.] Mr. Lehr reported on the previous Light Board meeting (see List of Attachments) and will attend the next Light Board meeting; the Light Board appears to question enough volunteers can be found to staff both an energy task force and a rate structure subcommittee.

Discussion included: There are many good energy visionaries in town. The Light Plant needs to move on rate structuring. The Light Plant should decouple rates, but tiered rates may be more effective than time-of-use rates. Article 44 is too complicated for Town Meeting.

Ms. Appel moved that the Committee support Article 44, Request to Create a Concord Municipal Light Board Advisory Committee to Analyze Benefits of and Requirements to Implement a Single Revenue Decoupled Time-of-Use Rate Structure. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson seconded. Discussion included: Hopefully a resolution can be found before Town Meeting which will result in Article 44 not being moved, as the Committee would like to see rate structure changed but does not want to appear to oppose the Light Plant. All **VOTED** in favor, except Mr. Lehr who voted against.

The Committee discussed Article 42 (floor area ratios). Discussion included: The proposed floor area ratio would have a minor effect. All other things being equal, we may expect a small house to have lower energy consumption. The article is an incremental step.

Mr. Lehr moved that the Committee support Article 42, Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Dimensional Regulations, Residence Districts Maximum Floor Area Ratio & Nonconforming Single And Two-Family Residential Structures. Ms. Felshin seconded. All **VOTED** in favor.

It was noted that at earlier meetings, the Committee voted its support of Article 20, item M (Community Preservation Committee Appropriation Recommendations, Town of Concord/Concord On Tap – Drinking Water Fountains for Concord Playing Fields) and Article 45 (Bylaw Prohibiting Polystyrene in Food Service Ware).

The Committee discussed Article 34 (reduced affordability requirements). Discussion included: Housing in town centers leads to lower overall energy use because it is closer to transit and other services. The article would reduce Concord's percentage of affordable housing by increasing the total number of units without increasing the number of affordable units. Since the article applies to developments in the number of four units or fewer, the increase in non-affordable housing would be small, and is therefore a reasonable tradeoff for reduced energy use.

Ms. Felshin moved that the Committee support Article 34, Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Combined Business/Residence. Ms. Appel seconded. All **VOTED** in favor.

The Committee agreed by consensus to craft a single sheet summarizing all Committee positions on warrant articles, for distribution as a handout at Town Meeting. Mr. Whitney and Ms. Felshin were tasked with producing the sheet and, with Ms. Cady, making arrangements for Town Meeting.

Green Communities (continued)

With the arrival of Ms. Cady, the Committee resumed its discussion of Green Communities.

Ms. Cady reported: Deputy Superintendent for Finance & Operations John Flaherty is preparing a Green Communities competitive grant application, due March 25, for heating at the Ripley school building. Ms. Aceti is preparing a description for the new energy staff position, to be split between the Town and the Light Plant. Assistant Town Manager Kate Hodges thinks that the Energy Manager position has only been helpful to the schools and the community, and is therefore not interested in continuing the position. Ms. Cady has delivered a document to Jana Dengler, the new Facilities Manager and Ms. Cady's new immediate supervisor, detailing funding that the Committee and the Energy Manager have brought into Concord; Ms. Dengler has since met with Ms. Hodges. Since the budget is already set for this coming year, this decision cannot be altered. Ms. Cady is investigating possibilities to continue her position through the Concord schools and Carlisle. A small portion of the funding for Ripley boilers (\$25K out of

\$250K) could be shifted to fund the Energy Manager position through the schools. Ms. Cady noted that if she does not continue working for the Town, then the Town will have to find someone else to write Green Communities applications.

Discussion included: Members of the Committee will not write Green Communities applications. Since Ms. Aceti works half time for the Town, she could write Green Communities applications. Perhaps the Energy Manager position could be partially funded out of the Sustainability Fund for this budget cycle. In addition to bringing funding to Concord, the Energy Manager has also brought energy savings to Concord. Staff support will be needed to put on a Sustainable Living Fair.

Ms. Cady noted that Ms. Aceti is writing up the new split energy staffer position to include writing Green Communities applications, providing staff support to the Committee, and perhaps working with schools as well.

Ms. Cady reported that she looked at the energy use of 20 area public pools, and the Beede Center is in the center of the pack, so the assessment stands that the Beede is unlikely to reduce its energy usage.

Public Comment

Brian Foulds of 33 Riverdale Rd., who had just arrived, commented that the Light Board doesn't favor his article because they are concerned about the Town having too many committees and because the Light Board hasn't had a subcommittee before. He said that they would prefer to consider rate structure as part of net-zero planning (as proposed by Article 46) or an energy task force (as proposed by the Select Board). Discussion included: The Light Board had a subcommittee for solar siting.

Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Felshin, clerk

List of Attachments

1. Update from CMLP Meeting March 9, 2016.rtf
http://www.concordma.gov/pages/ConcordMA_CSE/Meeting%20Support%20Materials/March%208,%202016%20CSEC%20meeting/CMLP%20Mtg%20Notes%203-9-16