

# COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes  
September 13, 2016

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee was held on Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, at 7:30 pm at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center. Present were Committee members Jill Appel, Bruce Blumberg, Gilda Gussin, Brad Hubbard-Nelson (chair), Bill Lehr (Clerk), Janet Miller (new CSEC member), Annie Moore, and Alan Whitney. Also present were Jan Aceti (CMLP Energy Conservation Coordinator), Pamela Cady (Concord-Carlisle Energy Manager), and member of the public, Eric Reinhard.

## 1. Welcome visitors

Mr. Hubbard-Nelson welcomed members of the public. Janet Miller's candidacy for CSEC has been approved by the Town Manager, but she has to sign the appropriate forms before her membership is formalized.

## 2. Minutes

Ms. Appel moved to approve the minutes of August 9, as amended. Mr. Blumberg seconded. All **VOTED** in favor.

## 3. Next meetings

The next meetings for CSEC will be held October 18<sup>th</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM at the Harvey Wheeler House in West Concord. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson will look into how Gilda Gussin can participate via Skype since she will be out of town on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

## 4. Announcements

- Saturday, November 5: The electric car event that Brian Foulds has been organizing and was discussed at previous CSEC meetings is now scheduled to be hosted at Walden Pond on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Brian is hoping for volunteers to help from CSEC, and CSEC may have a table at the event.
- Saturday, October 29: Lexington will be hosting a sustainability fair on October 29<sup>th</sup> (see <http://www.lexingtonma.gov/lexsustain>) from 10am-4pm. CSEC members are encouraged to attend as it will be good potential source for ideas to assist in planning Concord's fair.

## 5. Chair's Report (Hubbard-Nelson)

- Membership:
  - Mr. Hubbard-Nelson announced that Sue Felshin is resigning from CSEC for personal reasons. CSEC members expressed regrets in light of the significant contributions Ms. Felshin has made to the Town and CSEC during her tenure.
  - Janet Miller will be joining CSEC, which leaves CSEC with one remaining membership opening.
- Energy Specialist position interviews:

- The Town of Concord is planning to hire for a new Energy Specialist position and has been collecting resumes. Five candidates have been identified for progressing to interviews. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson will participate on behalf of CSEC in the interviewing process which is expected to take place over the next few weeks. CSEC is expected to provide guidance regarding how the Energy Specialist is expected to work with CSEC and with respect to the questions to be considered in evaluating candidates. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson will meet with Ms. Aceti on Friday to discuss interview process and how CSEC will engage.
- Funding Sustainability in the Town's Budget
  - The Town's budget for 2017 will be finalized in October which means that CSEC needs to prepare its requests for funding support or other budget ideas over the next few weeks.
  - Budget needs to provide for additional sustainability incentives (e.g., supplementary rebate funding to whatever CMLP may provide for heat pumps, etc.), preparation of website, bike shelters, and sundry other line-items.
  - Ms. Appel has been putting together a draft budget for the Fair which provides an input to budget request (see Attachment #5). (In Ms. Appel's report of September 9 meeting with Mr. Whelan, see Attachment #1, she noted that a preliminary budget of \$25,000 had been approved for the Fair.)
  - Key component may be support for sustainability initiative marketing budgets. Jan Aceti mentioned that Sagewell indicated that in their experience with heat pumps in other communities, dollars spent on marketing were more beneficial in promoting adoption than dollars spent on rebates.

## **6. Cooler Concord Fair planning**

### **6.1. Summary of meetings and decisions made, status of volunteers**

- September 2: Ms. Appel, Ms. Gussin, and Mr. Hubbard-Nelson met with Harry Bartlett on September 2 to discuss website preparation and current estimate is approximately \$7K. In September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, Mr. Whelan expressed strong preference for integrating CSEC website with Town's revamped website which is expected to be live in November. The plan is to review this option in November. Expectation is that much of the content for the website will be by-product and identical to content needed for the Fair, and strong hope that website will be up and running in time for Fair. Ms. Moore indicated she can help with preparing sample format for potential CSEC website.
- September 6: Ms. Appel, Ms. Gussin, Mr. Whitney, and Mr. Hubbard-Nelson met to discuss schedule and status of planning and seem to be on track for Fair for February, including getting website up and running by Fair.
- September 7: Ms. Appel, Ms. Gussin, Ms. Moore, and Mr. Hubbard-Nelson met with Peter Nichol of CCHS to discuss use of facilities, student roles, and scheduling. Also participating was Calli Yousha, CCHS teacher who will be teaching the environmental science class and members of the Green Team, which is the CCHS student environmental group. The class will include 24 students and expectation is that these students will serve as volunteers to assist in Fair planning, with potential for 2 student interns per category. Mr. Lehr and Ms. Gussin will reach out to Concord Academy and Middlesex to find out how they might be involved. Ms. Gussin has been following up with lower schools in Concord, including Thoreau and Alcott. Goal is to involve parents of children in the schools.

- September 9: Ms. Appel and Mr. Hubbard-Nelson met with Chris Whelan, Town Manager, to discuss Fair planning and CSEC (see Attachment 1 and notes earlier). In addition, ideas were discussed for how to integrate municipal assistance with on-going sustainability efforts in the town. Various ideas discussed such as having Town employees or volunteers help with LED replacement, programming thermostats, or work with other projects such as the effort to rehab and distribute bicycles that Public Works collaborated with ATA Cycle to do last spring. These may be projects that the Energy Specialist might help organize.

## 6.2. Status of each area

- Home Heating and Cooling (Brad Hubbard-Nelson): See Attachment #2. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson is working on graphics for two Fair stations – one providing options for upgrading heating systems; and a second promoting heat pumps as an option. He is pretty clear on posters desired. He is collecting information on Federal and existing tax credits, including MassSave. He has a "To Do" list that needs to be reconciled with work plan. He is targeting a workshop for the end of October on heat pumps that will produce much of the materials needed for this Fair category. Would be good to have list of qualified installers of heat pumps. Suggestion was made to look at NEEP website for guidance (<http://www.neep.org/>). Ms. Aceti indicated she can provide data from Sagewell on projected carbon impacts and costs of heat pump adoption.
- Weatherization (Pamela Cady): See Attachment #3. Planning to have a table with programmable thermostats. Messaging will be designed to induce folks to install programmable thermostats and/or to educate them about the benefits and to help them learn how to install and program them. Expecting to have both hand-outs and pointers to YouTube instructional videos. May be able to use High School volunteers to help with programming. Ms. Appel indicated she has old Consumer Reports with ratings that she will try and find to share with Ms. Cady. Also, for CSEC budget request, Ms. Appel requested that Ms. Cady prepare estimate of line item for weatherization and programmable thermostat component for the Town budget; and to purchase for the Fair to be included in the Raffle.
- Hot Water (Alan Whitney): Mr. Whitney has been refining some of the estimates for the costs of updating hot water systems. The costs depend on what homeowner is replacing. If electric, then simple. If oil, then more complicated. For example, may need to have 220V service installed to where water heater will be. Payback period is about 6 years even with no incentives today. The prices of heat pumps for hot water are falling and the efficiency continues to improve. A question to consider is whether heat pump vendors should be invited to participate. It was noted that when homeowners replace a hot water heater, it is often because existing one has failed and replacement is needed quickly. In that context, it would be useful to educate consumers in advance so they are aware that a heat pump is a green option that should be considered.
- Transportation (Janet Miller): See Attachment #11. Ms. Miller is focusing on bikes; whereas Ms. Felshin was focusing on vehicular sustainability ideas. Ms. Miller will need help to cover the category since Ms. Felshin is resigning from CSEC. Ms. Appel agreed to provide support in near-term. Hope is that Mr. Foulds materials from the planned November electric vehicle event (see above) may prove helpful here. With respect to bikes, Ms. Miller indicated that the Acton bike shop will be bringing a few different bikes (e.g., foldable and electric-assist bikes for commuting), as well as some low cost hand-outs and raffle items. Ms. Miller has also been identifying possible category items for the CSEC recommendations for the budget to enhance Concord's support for biking. For example, Ms. Miller noted that South

Acton has 20 bike lockers and room for 50 bikes and most of them are used. This is significantly more than what is currently available at the Concord train stations. It was discussed whether a map of bike trails might be produced.

- Home Appliances (Jill Appel): See Attachment #8. Ms. Appel indicated that line drying and a number of other options have been identified. Plan is to get student volunteers to prepare materials on Energy Star appliances for Fair.
- Solar Power (Jill Appel): See Attachment #9. Ms. Appel indicated that this category is in good shape. She noted that the current SREC program will end shortly and the new SREC program that will come out in early 2017 may exclude municipal light plant communities, ending solar program for Towns like Concord. The current program calls for installs to occur by January 8<sup>th</sup> of 2017). Ms. Appel indicated the vendor Direct Energy Solar already has 180 installations already.
- LED Lighting (Annie Moore): See Attachment #7. Ms. Moore is looking into whether the CMLP rebate might be improved to match MassSave's. CMLP's current \$3 rebate may be claimed on up to 30 bulbs annually. Mr. Blumberg agreed that getting a lighting expert from Wolfers (<http://www.wolfers.com/>) involved would be a good idea. Mr. Lehr mentioned it might be fun to include pointers to programmable LEDs from providers like Phillips (see their Hue product line, <http://www2.meethue.com/en-us/>) or from Lixf (<http://www.lifx.com/>), which show switching to LEDs can save energy and money, and enhance the quality of in-home lighting.
- Low-Maintenance Lawn Care (Bruce Blumberg): See Attachment #10. Mr. Blumberg substantially revised his category description to shorten it to a few pages. A lot of the ideas are straightforward like mow lawn less frequently. Longer term the goal is to induce homeowners to switch from gas to battery powered motors, or from 2-stroke to 4-stroke engines. Someone suggested possibly seeing if motion at Town meeting might seek to phase out gas powered mowers altogether. A number of folks noted that inducing landscapers who use ride-on motors presents a big challenge. Ms. Appel also suggested considering recommending folks plant different grass varieties that requires less maintenance (less fertilizer, less mowing, less water).
- Carbon Offsets/Green Power Purchase (Bill Lehr): See Attachment #4. Mr. Lehr noted that there is a lot of material in the write-up. The key to offsets is that they should be used once efforts have been made to reduce carbon footprints. A key component of understanding offsets is to use a Carbon Calculator. Many options exist. It will be useful to identify verified offset programs that provide a level of assurance that any moneys paid for offsets will actually achieve their intended goal. Possibility that may be able to use on-line access at Fair to acquire offsets. Several offset projects are identified that are affiliated with Concord residents that may be good to point to. Need to check. Also, Mass Energy has a wind energy fund.

## 7. Liaison Reports

- Mr. Hubbard-Nelson has been attending EFTF meetings and noted that they have a growing repository of working group reports documenting their progress (<http://www.concordnet.org/1098/Energy-Future-Task-Force>). The next EFTF public forum is scheduled for October 20. EFTF member, Wally Johnston, wants to meet with CSEC as representative of citizen views on sustainability. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson and Janet Miller will meet with Mr. Johnston.

- Green Your Heat Residual (Jan Aceti): Ms. Aceti indicated that the remaining funds will be used to replace Concord streetlights with LEDs.
- Green Communities (Jan Aceti): Weather normalized reporting will be required for annual reporting in the future. The unnormalized data shows a bigger reduction in energy use for 2015, but in either case, savings in Concord are substantially below what was planned for in original goals. Data is from MassEnergyInsight website (<https://www.massenergyinsight.net/mei/overview.html>), but authorization is required to access. Ms. Aceti can provide data.

## **8. Adjournment**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Lehr, CSEC clerk

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## **9. List of Attachments**

1. Appel Review of meeting with Whelan.pdf (email to CSEC, 9/13/2016)
2. Carbon Offset Category for Fair 9-11-16.pdf
3. Cooler Concord Fair Budget – Draft 9-12-16.xlsx
4. Cooler Fair – PStats & Weatherization updated 9-10-16.docx
5. Cooler Fair Monthly Milestones 9-13-16REV.xlsx
6. Home heating and cooling9-12-16.docx
7. LEDs draft plan3 9-5-16.docx
8. Line Dry Category Description 8-10-16.docx
9. Solar Power Category Description 8-10-16.docx
10. sustainable lawns 9-5-16.docx
11. Transportation Description\_Bicycling\_8-30-16.docx
12. CSEC 160913 slides a.pdf