

Town of Essex
Energy Committee
Minutes
Wednesday, October 19, 2022
7:00 PM – 81 Main Street, Essex Jct

Present: Will Dodge, Dottie Bergandahl, Michael Fink, Natalee Braun, David Skopin, Tom Yandow. Absent: Irene Wrenner. Special guest (via Zoom): Gregory Fern

ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Minutes of 09/21 and 08/18: Approved by unanimous vote following changes by Natalee.
2. Vacancy: position remains open. The Committee discussed the possibility of an Essex Junction energy committee.
3. Use of Video: apparently Will has been assigned an essex.org address to use for MS Teams access.

SUBSTANTIVE

1. Button-Up Event / Explore Essex Post-Script. The Committee discussed the fact that we reached roughly 60 to 70 people over two days with weatherization / heat pump information. Venue was positive, people were engaged, most of the schwag was given away (particularly VGS weatherization kits). Keys to success included the early start. Downsides included the fact that Button Up itself did not provide much in terms of goodies to give out, as well as the ongoing issues with contractor availability. The Committee agreed that doing Button Up events earlier was a good idea, as is piggybacking on already-organized municipal events. The Committee set their focus on trying to have a presence at Champlain Valley Fair in 2023 (perhaps with other energy committees participating). David and Natalee were thanked for procuring a tent. **ACTION ITEMS:** Commence work on trying to do Button Up next year at CVE.

2. GHG Mapping Effort: Through Mike Fink, the Committee was introduced to Gregory Horne, who is working on an internship to determine the GHG output of Essex (in very broad terms) and is working through the STEM Academy at Essex High School to tackle the problem. **ACTION ITEMS:**

3. Revolving Loan Fund Information. Will explained the revolving loan fund presentation made at the Regional Energy Committee Meeting through Ann Janda. The committee discussed the process by which South Burlington obtained approval, and the types of projects for which RLF had been used (e.g., HVAC conversions, LEDs, charging stations, weatherization, EVs, and equipment). Tom described several projects that may be available to include in a proposal to the Selectboard. The Committee agreed that this is something that should be pursued with the Selectboard for the Town. **ACTION ITEM:** Contact Sarah Macy regarding possibility of commencing the process (in concert with Ann Janda).

4. Other Highlights from Regional Energy Committee Meeting. Will discussed the separate presentation from Dave Roberts at Drive Electric VT regarding current incentives on certain models of vehicle for which the \$7500 EV credit was available, as well as the new rules that will start in January. The Committee discussed the delays with multiple models, as well as the need to make sure Essex has sufficient charging stations. Will also reviewed the presentation from Laura Bailey at Vermont Rural Communities regarding various grants for technical assistance to be used to support communities working on local climate action solutions in identifying priorities and implementing initiatives that

move from towards climate energy and economic goals by offering targeted facilitation strategic planning and project support. The Committee discussed whether it might be worth submitting an application by November 7th.

5. Town Plan Subcommittee Energy

Priorities. Will discussed his draft of 5 out of 7 items thought to be priorities from the Energy Committee for inclusion in the next version of the town plan. Ken Signorello's suggestions were also discussed.

Suggestions included (1) ensuring that new buildings are decarbonized as much as possible; (2) preserving trees in the area to the maximum extent possible; (3) for industrial facilities, produce as least 1/3 to 1/2 of energy on site. **ACTION ITEM:** Everyone to provide comments by Monday, 10/24.

6. Updates; Other Business. (a) Life cycle analysis: Tom Yandow pointed out that this is not necessary at this time, but further pointed out that there is work going on to identify a single municipal building complex based on 6 or 7 potential sites. (b) Brief discussion regarding subcommittees focusing on industrial expansion near Al Senecal lands. (c) Brief discussion regarding report to the Selectboard. (d) Will discussed publication of article regarding the CSWD MRF. (e) Rotary Club letter on solarization still on hold. **Action Item:** Will to draft an interim report to the Selectboard on EEC activities this year.

Motion to adjourn accepted.

Next Meeting: Wed., November 9, 2022 at 7:00 PM