



# ESSEX ENERGY COMMITTEE

Covering Town and Village energy needs since 2008

## **A G E N D A: (Updated)**

Wednesday, March 15, 2022 @7:00pm

**Municipal Offices, 81 Main Street, Village of Essex Junction, Vermont**

## Microsoft Teams meeting

**Join on your computer, mobile app or room device**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 278 696 145 325, Passcode: ho9yvo

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

**Or call in (audio only)**

[+1 802-377-3784,,102232687#](#) United States, Middlebury, Phone Conference ID: 102 232 687#

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### ADMINISTRATIVE

- A. Draft Minutes from 12/15/2022, 01/18/2023, 02/02/2023

### SUBSTANTIVE

1. Energy Code Development Project: Potential Recommendation to SB (John Alden, Energy Futures Group, via remote) – Proposal Attached
2. Municipal Energy Resilience Program Applications (Tom) – Proposal Attached
3. Town Plan Updates – Energy Section (see Cat Maw Email of 03/05/2023, below)
4. Discussion Follow-Up from Town Meeting
5. Brief Updates
  - a. Champlain Valley Fair Energy Event (Dottie)
  - b. Revolving Loan Fund
  - c. Landfill Solar Inquiry from Kirt Mayland
6. Other Business

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Hello Will,

As I am sure you know, we are updating the Town Plan to be approved by voters in March 2024. As a part of that process, we are asking for department and committee comments on relevant sections of the Town Plan.

I am reaching out to you about actions 5.1-5.6 and any other relevant parts of chapter 2 you might believe need some updating. I will attach chapter 2 to this email just as an easy access refresher, energy starting at the bottom

of page 57. Additionally I will provide the notes we have on actions 5.1-5.6 - please let me know if there are any updates/details unaccounted for.

**5.1:** Fund an Energy Coordinator position to develop energy implementation plans, coordinate efforts with other government agencies, and encourage residential and commercial energy conservation.

- This was described as a short term project, declared as completed. **Notes:** CCRPC's Energy Coordinator serves Essex in part; ComDev staff provide local implementation and outreach support

**5.2:** Continue to explore energy efficiency and renewable energy options for all Town-owned and Town-sponsored facilities, from buildings to street lighting. Findings and recommendations should be based on an audit of all Town-owned and Town-sponsored facilities and a subsequent cost-benefit analysis for upgrading or replacing those facilities.

- This was described as a short term project, declared as currently implementing. **Notes:** Gas-powered Town vehicles replaced with hybrids; net-metering agreement with Sand Hill Solar; EV charging station installed at Town Office.

**5.3:** Revise the zoning regulations to incent and/or require residential and commercial energy standards that exceed Vermont energy building codes.

- This was described as a medium term activity, with no activity declared. **Notes:** Per CCRPC Climate Change and Land Use guide, unclear if zoning is the appropriate place for this (though zoning incentives already exist). Town may consider full local building codes at some point.

**5.4:** Develop education programs and participate in Efficiency Vermont programs to encourage energy efficiency in existing residential and commercial buildings.

- This was described as a medium term project declared as currently implementing. **Notes:** EC has hosted Button Up events annually since 2020, as well as other community outreach campaigns; ComDev has shared posts on FPF about weatherization and EV incentives.

**5.5:** Promote community solar net metering and evaluate the former Town landfill for use as a potential future site.

- This was described as a long term project declared as hindered/delayed. **Notes:** Town landfill likely structurally unable to support ground-mounted solar (but hasn't been studied in detail). Energy Plan and ComDev staff support net-metering, especially on preferred sites, and Town participates in net-metering for municipal buildings.

**5.6:** Develop and implement strategies to become an "Electric Vehicle-Ready Town".

- This was described as a short term project, declared as currently implementing. **Notes:** Town has distributed info on EV charging to community / key partners; future zoning amendments will incorporate EV charging in parking requirements

As I am aware that your committee meets once a month, we would love to hear back from you by May. Please consider bringing this topic to a committee meeting as well if need be.

Best,  
Cat Mawn  
Intern

## Vermont Building Energy Code Administration Improvement Project

- **We have an opportunity to secure significant federal funds for Vermont's construction industry.**
  - U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) #2813 has the potential to bring >\$4 million to Vermont over the next three years to help us develop an energy code administration system and support our construction industry with training and technical assistance.
  - We submitted a preliminary concept paper and DOE has invited us to submit a full proposal.
  - The Department of Public Service (PSD) and Division of Fire Safety (DFS) would be key contributors in this conversation.
- **The current energy code landscape is not fair to Vermont builders, home buyers, or renters.**
  - Codes provide a level playing field, but when energy codes are not followed, it is no longer level.
  - Responsible builders are at a competitive disadvantage with builders unwilling or unable to follow the codes — or even who are totally unaware of them.
  - More than 50% of Vermont homes built in Vermont today fail the RBES energy code. (<https://publicservice.vermont.gov/efficiency/evaluations-and-studies>).
  - Vermonters who buy or rent homes that are not built to code pay too much for energy.
- **This DOE grant would help Vermont meet the goals of RBES and CBES to level the playing field.**
  - It would bring together all the interested parties to figure out innovative solutions to energy code administration through a broad stakeholder process with no preconceived outcomes.
  - It would provide funding for significant training and technical support to our construction industry, resulting in better performing buildings, resulting in lower operating costs for owners and renters.
  - It would allow us to better meet our climate goals.
- **We seek the Scott Administration's support.**
  - We cannot get to the right answer without DFS and PSD at the table.
  - Let us secure \$4 million of U.S. DOE federal funding to help us solve this problem.
  - The Administration's cooperation could be key to bringing this Federal money to Vermont.
- **There is broad support for this grant:**

| Project Team Members                                                           | Project Supporters                                  |                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Energy Futures Group (Project Lead)                                            | American Institute of Architects (AIA) – VT Chapter | Huntington Homes                                                     |
| Vermont Secretary of State (including their Office of Professional Regulation) | Association of General Contractors of VT            | New Buildings Institute (NBI)                                        |
| International Code Council Efficiency Vermont                                  | Burlington Department of Permitting and Inspections | Snyder Homes                                                         |
| Burlington Electric Department                                                 | Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission      | VT Representatives Campbell, Pouech, Stebbins, Watson                |
| Vermont Gas Systems                                                            | City of South Burlington                            | VT Senators Bray, Perchlik, Ram Hinsdale, Illuzzi (former)           |
| Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies                       | City of Montpelier                                  | Vermont Business for Social Responsibility                           |
|                                                                                | ClearlyEnergy                                       | Vermont Builders and Remodelers Association                          |
|                                                                                | Eco Houses of Vermont                               | Vermont Housing Finance Agency                                       |
|                                                                                | Energy Action Network                               | VT Office of Economic Opportunity, Weatherization Assistance Program |
|                                                                                | Evernorth                                           |                                                                      |
|                                                                                | Hayward Design Build                                |                                                                      |

## Will Dodge

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**From:** Ann Janda <ajanda@ccrpcvt.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 12:09 PM  
**To:** Ann Janda  
**Subject:** [EXT] MERP Community Capacity Building Mini-Grants of up to \$4,000 now accepting applications!

Dear Chittenden County Municipal Contacts interested in MERP and Energy Committees,

Vermont Buildings and General Services (BGS) just announced that the [Municipal Energy Resilience Program \(MERP\) is now accepting applications for the Community Capacity Building Mini-Grants of up to \\$4,000](#). This funding is meant to be used by municipalities for energy resilience community education and outreach.

Here is a list of ideas for how this money could be utilized (gathered from municipalities across the state):

### SAMPLE LIST OF ELIGIBLE USES

- Direct mailings to residents regarding efficiency programs, weatherization programs, and/or rebates
- Translation of energy efficiency outreach materials into other languages
- Hire a consultant to reach out to residents directly about efficiency programs, weatherization programs, and/or rebates
- Pay for standing racks to hold handouts on efficiency programs, weatherization programs, and/or rebates to place in municipalities and hardware stores
- Hire a consultant to oversee MERP project invoices (if awarded a project grant)
- Hire a consultant/grant writer to apply for other state and federal grants to stack with MERP (RPCs and VLCT may be able to provide some support)
- Hire a consultant to assist in identifying project(s) for future energy assessments/projects (RPCs are doing this in some capacity)
- Consultant/grant writer to help with a town's application to MERP (again, RPCs are doing this, but it is an eligible use)
- Host a community energy fair or similar public energy event
- Training for municipal officials/town staff on energy efficiency topics (basics of weatherization, heat pumps etc.)
- Host a public informational meeting about energy resilience (money can be used to provide refreshments, print/distribute materials etc.)
- Start an energy committee

The application is very simple and there is no rush to apply. This is not a competitive grant. Only an authorized municipal official can fill out the application.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to meet with me to discuss this grant or MERP in general.

Best,  
Ann

*Ann Janda, Senior Energy Project Manager  
Pronouns: she, her, hers  
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Winooski, VT 05404*

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[www.ccrpcvt.org](http://www.ccrpcvt.org)

