

Charlotte Energy Committee – MINUTES

April 11, 2012, Town Hall

Present: Anne Bijur, Suzy Hodgson, Catherine Hughes, Michelle Lussier, Gerald (as Planning Commission liaison)

Approved minutes from 3/14/12

Discussion of Energy Section of Revised Town Plan

Sharon Murray, planning consultant, coming to the Planning meeting on 4/19. Does the Committee have anything specific to ask her?

- Issue of scale with renewable energy installations and how to define or develop criteria.

Anne shared that the State has legislated a solar registration process where solar projects 5kW or less do not have to apply for a permit but only pay a fee and automatically receive a registration. House Bill 475 is currently under consideration and will raise the limit to 10kW. We propose that any solar installation that falls under the state registration program be considered residential in scale. The next state threshold for permitting falls at 150kW where projects must meet more stringent requirements. We propose that any installations under 150kW be considered community scale and those equal to or larger than 150kW be considered commercial.

We reviewed and approved Jennifer's draft overview of the energy section, Michelle's section on district energy sources, and Suzy's section that addresses context and why the town should have an energy plan.

Incentive section – Catherine will do further research into Hinesburg's incentive programs to inform our process.

We discussed whether we could or should encourage lower town tax rates for energy-efficient homes and if we could require homeowners selling their houses to disclose energy bills to potential buyers. Gerald suggested that we could offer a rebate of part of the local permitting costs if the final construction of a house meets energy star codes.

Anne will draft the Transportation section.

Other Business

Michelle will follow-up with the library and the concept of district heating in the village.

Suzy met Jeff Spafford who offered to give a presentation on geothermal energy as an education opportunity for the town.

Tampering with the controls in Town Hall still an issue. We need the Selectboard to help us move forward with encouraging behavior change among the building occupants. Anne to send Winslow Richmond's recommendations on encouraging energy conservation in town offices and solicit his help.

Green Homes Energy Tour – great turnout, more than 50 attendees.

John Quinney's Energy Coop of Vermont will host an information session on solar hot water at the Library soon.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Bijur