

## Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2013

7:00 – 8:50 PM

Town Hall

Attending: Suzy, Gerald, Rebecca, Catherine, Lily, Kestrel Grevatt, Deb Sachs, Jen

- Introductions around the table.
- Special guest, Deb Sachs, co-founder of VCAN and consultant with Go Vermont, sent by Ross MacDonald, Go Vermont Program Manager, VTrans, to discuss the mini-grant of \$500 Rebecca applied for and that was granted to the energy committee.

The project goal is to reduce the cost and environmental impacts of transportation. A requirement of the grant is for the energy committee to promote the Go Vermont program, including encouraging more Charlotters to sign up for the car/vanpool program called Zimride, which matches rides and riders in the area. The larger the database of users, the more opportunities there will be for success. CVU is a subgroup of Zimride.

The Go Vermont program is part of Go Chittenden County, and also includes the guaranteed ride home program; vanpool subsidies; connection to/information about public transit providers; bicycle info through Local Motion; and information on Park and Ride locations.

*Methods of promoting Go Vermont:*

- Put the Go Vermont! Logo on the town website with a hotlink. Suzy will do.

- Jen requested that Deb send us information sufficient to craft an article for the newspaper announcing the program and encouraging people to sign up.

- Put up posters and place brochures around town. Deb gave us three posters: Suzy will put one in Town Hall, one at Spear St corner store, and Rebecca will put one in the library with brochures. Deb will send Rebecca more posters for other public places (school, Senior Center, Brick Store.)

- Information was already distributed at Town Party day on July 6. (Note: Is anyone going to the town party on July 21 who could take brochures?)

- Deb will look into possibility of putting all Charlotters who are signed up on Zimride into a raffle drawing for the SkiRack bike tune-up gift certificate. Will need to promote and set date for drawing (the certificate is valid through calendar year so should not wait long!) We can then write an article for the paper on the winner.

*Methods of maximizing the \$500 grant:*

- Find in-kind donations to match or not, such as getting a group such as Local Motion to do an event; or the ferry to donate free passes; etc. Need more ideas.

*Additional thoughts/discussion:*

- The tricky part about transportation is that it requires thinking differently and changing behavior.

- Proven techniques for success are incentives; and practice that turns changed behavior into a habit.

- Considerable interest within the group in trying to increase the school bus ridership for CCS and CVU. Consensus that since CVU is a multivillage school there is not a lot we can do there except through Kestrel if she is willing. Deb's idea to raise the cost of the student parking passes at CVU from \$50 to \$500 to disincentivize kids from driving solo. We can consider entering CCS in the Way to Go School Challenge in the fall, Oct 7-11, which might dovetail with the new Safe Routes to School program at CCS. Info to research on CVU and CCS: total amt for school buses and fuel in the respective school budgets; and capacity of bus usage. Suzy described the technique of "critical mass" used in London, in which amassed cyclists take over the roads; could potentially be used for getting groups of kids to school. If we are interested in getting some survey information on what deters people from using the buses, Deb can help through her group Vital

Communities, which does survey work. Jen requested that Deb share info on typical deterrents in other towns, as well as solutions.

Deb left the meeting, and we agreed to think about the program individually and work via email over the next two months to formulate a plan that we can affirm and put into motion at our September meeting.

- Approve minutes from June 12, with one change.
- Feedback from Town Party: Lackluster attendance and mixed opinions on the comments sheet Suzy put out (but a lovely banner!)
- Library: Jen and Catherine to meet with Margaret.
- Kestrel Grevatt, Lily's replacement as CVU rep on committee; Suzy will arrange with Dean to get her appointment on the SB agenda.
- Committee membership: Discussion of the perennial problem of having an even number of seats on the committee and one vacancy. We will try to fill the vacancy in the next few months and possibly revisit the idea of reducing the number of seats back to seven.
- PV on town buildings: Rebecca has started investigations into what is possible for leasing and using roofs rather than land, assuming that's a can of worms nobody is yet ready to open in Charlotte. There are constraints on non-residential systems, but possibilities through the new program Green Lantern out of Waterbury. She will do more investigations with an eye to developing an RFI that could be sent out by REV to all vendors. Rebecca will find out any pertinent background info from CCS and Suzy will do the same for CVU.

- Charlotte News: Potential for designing a series of energy articles over the next year, especially in anticipation of the revised town plan after 15 years. For starters, we should promote a profile of Kestrel and Lily and the CVU seat on the committee for August publication.
- Jen brought up that she is interested in learning more about the behavior change work at CVU and how to pilot that strategy here in the town office. Perhaps teacher-advisor for the environment club, can come to the next meeting, or some of our committee could meet with her at CVU. Kestrel will ask Katie.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Foster