

COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABILITY & ENERGY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Comprehensive Sustainability & Energy Committee was held on May 14, 2019 at 7:00 pm at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center. CSEC members present were Janet Miller (chair), Julie Kleyn (clerk), Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Jerry Frenkil, Doug Sharpe, Sharon Jones and Karen Gibson. Also present was Mark Myles, Charles Parker and Terri Ackerman.

1. Welcome visitors

Janet welcomed visitors: Mark Myles, Charles Parker and Terri Ackerman.

2. Approval of minutes from April 2 meeting

Sharon suggested minor changes. Brad motioned to approve, Sharon seconded. All were in favor.

3. Chair's report/announcements

Next meeting will be 7pm Tuesday June 5 at Harvey Wheeler.

Election of new officers. Janet nominated Doug as new Chair, Brad seconded. All were in favor.

Janet said her time as Chair has been very rewarding and not too time-consuming and Doug said he's looking forward to being Chair but would welcome support from the committee as he learns the new role. He also said he will need help covering committee meetings during the summer months in his absence.

Janet proposed Julie continue as Clerk. Brad seconded and all were in favor.

Janet reminded all that National Grid tabling continues as a task for CSEC. Three town events have occurred so far, twelve events this year is the total, all CSEC members are expected to help table once or twice.

Janet alerted the group to a ConcordCAN meeting Tuesday May 21 where speakers would address the topic of net-zero schools.

Brad told the group that DOER recently announced a new solar program for which Concord will be eligible. Brad proposed CSEC help promote this, using material and techniques from the first solar program as much as possible. The target would be approximately 100 homes, and CSEC would need to identify an installer. The program would entail a one-time rebate of \$1.20 per kw (so for eg, a 7kw system would receive a \$7000 rebate which is arguably better than the payback-over-time SREC program). The rebate covers up to 50% reduction off total cost. Additionally, federal and state rebates will continue to be available. Doug provided informational handouts. (DOUG'S HANDOUT MUST BE ATTACHED TO THE APPENDIX OF THESE MINUTES)

4. Discussion on adoption of goals for effective high-performance building design (Charles Parker, guest speaker)

Charles stressed the importance of citizen action/involvement in promoting net-zero building practices in Concord.

a. New middle school

This is a 90 million dollar building project. Charles said it's critical that residents make clear to the Town and the Building Committee that they want a sustainable school. He cited Belmont, Lexington and Lincoln as examples of successful citizen advocacy where citizen action groups overturned plans that did not include solar, heat pumps and other sustainable elements. But this will not happen unless people get involved and speak out.

Doug asked whether architects had been part of these net-zero action groups. Charles responded that it's of paramount importance to secure a net-zero architect at the outset in order to prevent long-term tension and disagreement throughout the project between non-sustainable architects/contractors and net-zero planning/building committees.

Charles has created a document to help guide the selection of a sustainable architect and he shared with the group an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) table comparing energy expenditure with different kinds of building practices (conventional, code, high-performance, net-zero). The goal should be 20-25 Btu, and actual output can be measured and compared with the original goal once the building is complete and systems are running. Charles affirmed that these stats would be consistent with DOER's analysis and goals. (WE NEED TO ATTACH CHARLES' DOC TO APPENDIX)

Terri questioned how sustainable an electrically-powered school would be but Charles said CMLP is moving toward 100% renewables so this will not present a problem.

Brad asked whether building costs increase the lower the Btu goal and Charles responded that the building envelope needs to be really tight, with specs that address the specific site and R factors in all areas, this, he says will ensure a good EUI. Geothermal is very popular in schools and office buildings and solar is a must.

Belmont compared gas heat with ground source and air source heat pumps and ground source (geothermal) had proven to show lowest cost of ownership.

Charles said he expects the middle school would end up being high performance rather than net zero. At present, the school do not have geothermal systems for heating/cooling.

Terri Ackerman mentioned the importance of fiscal responsibility and said it's crucial to make the point that choosing high-performance or net-zero will ultimately save money. Charles concurred that building this way will cost more up front but less over time.

b. Town-sponsored low-income housing

(PLEASE HELP EDIT THIS, I WAS NOT CLEAR ON SOME POINTS, THANKS)

Charles does not feel the Concord Housing Authority (CHA) is doing enough to promote sustainable new building. Good solid high-performance electric housing is the goal.

Charles says he sees no reason why low-income housing cannot be sustainable and asks who is responsible for building operation and design of these buildings.

Charles said the CHA and the CHDC (WHAT DOES THIS STAND FOR?) must commission for locations to build more affordable housing. He said there are four different housing committees, which is very confusing. The Affordable Housing Trust Fund and CHA's job is funding and Charles stressed the importance of working with them to ensure sustainable practices are employed.

Charles says it's important to stay in the conversation with all other building plans in Town too, not just low-income housing and schools. He added that it's very important to get involved before plans are made, and hopes CSEC will do this.

Jerry said that Kate Hanley's goal is to have a sustainability advocate on all town committees which would ensure that the sustainability perspective is represented in all discussions of town projects. Jerry proposed having more liaison roles for example on the planning board and building committee.

Terri pointed out that capital planning is coming up on the agenda this summer, and a team will be working on that.

Charles Parker left the meeting.

5. Update on the Cooler Concord Sustainable Landscaping Fair (Karen Gibson, Janet Miller, Julie Kleyn, Brad Hubbard-Nelson)

- a. Janet confirmed the date, time and location of the Fair: May 18, 10am-2pm at CCHS (inside cafeteria if raining)

- b. Janet shared the list of participating organizations, plus details of the “Carbon Gardening” presentation (which will be videoed by Minuteman Media network), and food vendors and showed a layout for inside and outside scenarios. Janet explained logistics and how all organizations will have assigned numbered tables.
Terri asked what photography she would like us to do and the group discussed where these photos would be posted.
- c. Julie explained the three planned children’s activities and shared documents for these. The plant raffle and plant sales were also described.
- d. The extensive publicity efforts were re-capped (fliers, FaceBook ad, email distribution lists, e-newsletters, posters etc) although there is some concern that promotion needed to be stronger (banners, lawn signs) given competing Town events on the day of the Fair.
Sharon suggested asking CCHS radio to attend the Fair and announce the raffle, presentation etc. Julie said she would speak with Ned Roos about this.
- e. Janet explained the Town’s new demonstration gardens (alternative plantings for lawns), one of which has fortuitously just been planted at the high school beside the site for the Fair. Visitor Mark Myles from the newly-formed Natural Biodiversity Solutions (the group’s working title, they are a sub-group of ConcordCAN) is very interested in the demonstration gardens and spoke of the importance of “re-wilding” the town.
- f. Janet stressed the importance of having CSEC members help on Saturday. Brad said Andrea can help set up. Janet noted that one volunteer role is to explain composting and there followed a discussion about compost bins.
- g. Julie explained how Open Gardens (1-4pm May 18) will work and how 6 residents have offered to share their efforts at sustainable gardening with Fair visitors.

6. Clean Home Heating & Cooling Expo, June 8 (Brad Hubbard-Nelson)

There will be 2 events: CCHS June 8 and Wayland Public Library June 11
The Concord event will have 10 tables in the school’s Learning Commons and a presentation as follows:

- 10-minute introduction from Kate Hanley
- 20-minute talk by Dave Lyss of NEEP
- testimonials by people who have had heat pump installations

A representative from DOER and a heat pump vendor may attend to field questions.

Brad asked for volunteers to help on June 8. He also shared the flier with the group and will bring some to share with visitors at the upcoming Fair. **(ATTACH BRAD’S FLIER)**

Brad mentioned that NED had donated a free heat pump system because they got so much business and the HeatSmart team donated it to Codman Community Farms.

7. Progress on electric vehicle adoption and infrastructure (Janet Miller)

Janet said that the upcoming Stow Street Block Party (May 18) will have the Town's Nissan Leaf on display and hybrids, and the June 1 Library Book Sale will also have EVs present for the public to explore and discuss.

8. Liaison reports (Jerry Frenkil, Sam Lines)

Jerry attended the Climate Action Advisory Board (CAAB) meeting and said that Kate had submitted three different grant requests, the group appears to be very active on grant requests and they will hear by 6/1. Main topic with CAAB was how to establish a set of green building policies for the Town and how to create an RFP for what should be in these guidelines, a general sustainable spec for any Concord building. CAAB is seeking to hire a consultant to create this set of green building policies and they hope to then get the new consultant's recommendations before the school committee writes the RFP for the project manager/architect for the re-building of the middle school.

Terri pointed out that there is a ballot question on June 4 asking whether there should even be a feasibility study for the middle school.

9. Public comments

None.

10. Adjourn

Jerry motioned to adjourn at 9:07pm and Janet seconded. All approved.