

Energy Committee Minutes  
9/17/20

Meeting opened at 5:00 PM.

Present: Vance Bell, Bill Dunkel, Tom Johnson

Vance moved to accept the minutes of the August 20th meeting; Tom seconded; all approved.

Community Solar Update:

Bill reported on a conference call he had on Tuesday, 9/15, with Kim Friedman (West River 100% Renewable Chair), Michael Simonds and John Castonguay (Chief Innovation Officer at GMP). John confirmed that the East Jamaica substation, which serves Old Cheney Rd, has sufficient capacity to handle the power which could be generated by a 100-150 KW solar array on Michael's property. He will check the size of the transmission lines at Michael's house to see if they are robust enough to avoid a shadow flicker problem. He agreed medium sized community solar projects generally are unprofitable for commercial companies, but he will check to see if there are solar installers that we might contact. He indicated that GMP is more focused on reducing carbon emissions from transportation and heating than generating more solar power.

Bill also attended, via Zoom, the West River 100% Renewable core team meeting on September 15. Clay Turnbull reported that he could not reach several contacts at Co-op Power due to staff reductions related to the pandemic. He has sent an email to Lynn Benander, the President of Co-op Power, requesting a conference call with her.

Timber Ridge Update: Vance has spoken with Tim Waker and expressed our committee's interest in supporting a solar array on his trails at Timber Ridge. Tim indicated that he still may be interested, but he remains elusive. As far as Vance knows, Tim has not yet been to the town office to check property parcel maps to

confirm the boundary between his property and land owned by the Nature Conservancy. Vance will check back with him in a couple of weeks.

#### Efficiency VT/Button Up VT Update:

Bill attended a HEAT Squad webinar on 9/8 at which they promoted energy audits that they offer and other services which connect customers with contractors. The price of the audit is \$150. During the webinar, it was noted that Efficiency VT weatherization rebates were reduced starting September 4th. Now, income qualified households can get a 50% rebate, up to \$4,000 (not a 75%, \$5,500 rebate). Non qualifying households can get 50% rebate, up to \$1000 (not \$2000). These rebates are still relatively generous and may be attractive nonetheless.

Bill exchanged emails with Becca White, who is overseeing the Button Up VT program. She said that starting September 2<sup>nd</sup> people will be able to sign up for the virtual home energy visits. There will be a link on the Button Up Vermont page to share with residents that will link them to the scheduling application (TimeTap) so they can pick a date and time that works for them. However, the virtual home energy tours will not begin until January 2021. Bill will check with Becca to find out why there is such a gap between signing up and actually starting the home visits.

Becca confirmed that the virtual tours can occur using a smartphone or any smart device. If a resident does not have access to a device like that, or if internet service is inadequate, they can schedule a phone consultation with a contractor.

#### Tyz-all Update:

On Sept. 2, Bill emailed the five people who had signed up for the Window Dressers program at Town Meeting. He confirmed that all Window Dresser community builds have been cancelled for 2020-21. He informed them that Tyz-all window kits are available from Amazon for \$14.50 each and from Conservation Mart for about half that price. Bill sent them links to a Tyz-all installation video and to Amazon and Conservation Mart sites. Marcia Clinton has

ordered some Tyz-all kits. Bill also sent them all links to Efficiency Vermont's incentives and rebates webpage.

On 8/29 Bill sent all of the above information to Ellen McDuffie for the September issue of the *News & Notes*. We agreed that our committee should submit an article for the December *News and Notes*. We will discuss ideas for this article at our next meeting.

Meeting House Weatherization update:

We confirmed that the Farnham estimate for weatherizing the Meeting House attic is \$12,696, and the estimate for the crawl space is \$11,557. The energy Committee has \$5,718.93 in it's weatherization fund. Tom will check with the Meeting House committee to see if they would be interested in receiving this money and then raising the balance for either project from donations or from the Select Board.

The next meeting of the energy committee is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020 at 4:30 PM.