

Waltham Energy Action Committee

Thursday 7pm, January 20, 2011

Fire Dpt .Classroom, Municipal Ctr, 165 Lexington St.

Minutes

Members Present:

Pat Fox, Rick Oches, Kathy Randel, Leo Keightley, Andy Greene, Eileen Zubrowski, Melissa Downs

Others Present:

Jennifer Gokhale

A Recycling Department intern from Brandeis. This is Jennifer's 1st visit to a WEAC meeting.

Councilor Steven Rourke

Phil Jutras

Tony Dover

Jim Mniece

Mayor McCarthy

Allison Mooney

Allison is a Waltham resident and is interested in participating in WEAC afforts. This is Allison's 1st visit to a WEAC meeting.

(agenda in blue)

Note:

This meeting was originally scheduled for 13-Jan-'11 but due to weather related problems gaining access to the School St. Govt. Center and attendance uncertainties the meeting was rescheduled for 20-Jan.

Ms. Fox called the meeting to order at 7PM.

Welcome

- Pat mentioned the *Massachusetts Sustainable Communities Conference* which will take place in Marlborough MA on April 15 of this year. (<http://www.ameresco.com/event/massachusetts-sustainable-communities-conference>)
- We have visitors and we all introduced ourselves.

Review and accept minutes from previous meeting(s)

09dec10 minutes draft.pdf were accepted unanimously.

Review and close follow-up items

- update on PV project for municipal buildings (Andy)
 - From a 14-Jan-'11 email from Andy referring to a conversation on 13-Jan with Jim MNeice and Phil Jutras:
PV update: the Mayor is reviewing the Advisory Committee's recommendation for the top 3 vendors to choose, and she is in active discussions and should announce her decision soon. All indications are promising that Waltham will be able to move forward with a PV program in the neighborhood of 2,000 kW that will result in significant cost savings for the City.

- At today's meeting, Andy said they have recommended the top 3 companies and the Mayor is making the final selection and final contract. 70 days remain until the grant is used or it will be lost. There are a lot of technical details, particularly with roofs, and especially with the Municipal Center.
- Some companies involved:
 - Broadway Electrical
 - Constellation Energy
 - Ameresco
 - Borrego Solar Systems, Inc.
 - number of others
- Andy mentioned several reasons the PV market is very good now.
- Pat asked if the project needs committee help. Andy said this is in the Mayor's hands now.
- Current price for PV power is \$0.50/KWH
- The Mayor said she has interviewed the companies and thanked people who have worked on this. She mentioned another possible building: the ice rink on Totten Pond Road.
- update Green Communities (Kathy)
 - Kathy mentioned the Green Communities Subcommittee meeting which was held yesterday. The subcommittee reviewed the 5 criteria for Green Communities (GC) certification, developing a set of issues requiring further research.
 - Kathy has contacted the Green Communities consultant and they are working on finding time for getting together.
 - There was some discussion concerning the consultant.
 - Kathy mentioned we may want to develop the Waltham energy use baseline without the proposed PV installations included so that we can take credit for some or all of this project's contribution towards reduction in Waltham's non renewable electric power use.
 - The Subcommittee is determining who, in addition to the WEAC Subcommittee members should be involved in working with the state GC representatives on the GC plan for certification.
 - In order to gain access to Waltham energy details on the MassEnergyInsight system, for energy baseline, reduction, and monitoring activities, an authorization letter is required. The Mayor said to get a letter template to her.
- NSTAR Community Outreach grant (Janna & Eileen)
 - From a 14-Jan-'11 email from Andy referring to a conversation on 13-Jan with Jim MNeice and Phil Jutras:
 - Phil has been very active lately meeting with various groups and people in Waltham to spread the word about the program, and begin identifying interested volunteers to help recruit for the MassSave energy audits. He mentioned that there is a serious backlog right now in the MassSave schedule, and people calling for audits not are being scheduled the end of February -- about 5-6 weeks out. Because of this situation, NSTAR has instructed the grantees to hold off active recruiting right now -- possibly until as late as March. In the meantime, Phil is building relationships, getting the word out, and gearing up to train volunteers for when we can start active recruiting. Our brochure is now available, and Phil is getting additional materials from MassSave.
 - Eileen Met with interfaith group today. Rev. Marc Fredette is going to form a working group from the interfaith participants. We will give Marc flyers.

- Planned events this year:
 - 05-Feb: Presentation by Phil at 1st Parish UU Church (Barry Sterns, organizer)
 - Mid-Feb: Waltham Conservation Commission. Arrangements pending with Gloria Champion (WCC staff).
 - March, Some councilors will have meetings in their wards.
- Discussion: There were two general threads of discussion. One involved sources of people (to work with WEAC or GETI on program implementation or to actually participate in the audit-upgrade program). The other involved problems people have found in actual program participation. Following discussion bullets are not chronological but are grouped by these 2 threads:

Sources of people:

- Working on getting more volunteers for program help: Rick said Bently may provide point person or group. Phil said he'd like to work with Phil on that.
- Jennifer lives in apt in Waltham and maybe students could talk to landlords about this. Students are concerned about the environment, would like to help, and also would look favorably on an apartment with green work done.
- Phil, looking for groups that would become involved: He has found PTO meetings to be very well attended and positive. Phil hopes PTOs will lead to spreading word and having people call for audit and tell neighbors.
- Phil has been on Waltham Access TV.
- Phil: This year and next year a lot can get done through economic incentives. After that we don't know. We should communicate that this is an opportunity that people shouldn't loose. Phil said the audit and work can be used, with records to enhance saleability of a house.

Problems in program participation:

- Phil: Weather has slowed things a bit and NStar is backed up and has asked that grantees hold off on getting new plan participants.
- There was discussion of delays and varying values of audits. Phil referred to MassSave as a "phone bank."
- Steve: Who has authority to lean on utilities to improve throughput and quality? Phil, call CSG (Conservations Services Group (service co.)). Andy said he has talked to State Energy officials who are at a high level and think things are going great. Phil said HUD,
- Andy suggested collecting examples of what's not working and start with memo and phone call to NStar.
- The Mayor said she has had NStar people out a few years ago and has good contact info. "Maureen" is a good contact. Anne Marie Welsh is an NStar customer rep.
- The Mayor also said she may have a good local contact for National Grid:
- Mayor: If program reps. go door to door we have to coordinate this activity with police.
- Eileen has a contact who she will get in touch with and let us know.
- Pat: said we will put together report and contact people (AnnMarie and others). Also, Phil should get to us what will be said at the outreach meetings.
- Leo will make a list of problems people have had.
- Education & Outreach
 - no discussion

- Article for the Tribune
 - no discussion
- Review annual report (Leo)
 - Leo said the latest version (rev A3) is on the Google site and had 3 hard copies at the meeting.
 - Kathy said she has additions
 - Leo will update the report with whatever he is made aware of.

Other open items

Pat brought a DVD about the PV installation in Concord (50KW system). We watched this first. The Energy Coordinator in Concord is a friend of Eileen's and Eileen brought the DVD. "Willard School Solar" Installed by Broadway Electric Company with Solectria electronics.

Some financial sources:

- Conservation Block Grant
- Town \$ 50K?
- Donations
- Concord Light

Maintenance costs are paid by Concord Public Schools

57000KWH gen / year save \$8550/yr (9% of school's load)

New business

no discussion

Closing

Next Meeting – Thursday, February 10, 2011 - Public Meeting Room, Government Center
The committee adjourned at 9:15 PM.