

Waltham Energy Action Committee

Thursday 7pm, February 10, 2011

Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

Minutes

Members Present:

Pat Fox, Kathy Randel, Leo Keightley, Andy Greene, Eileen Zubrowski, Janna Cohen-Rosenthal, Melissa Downs

Others Present:

Barry Stearns:

Barry organized the Information Session for the Free Home Energy Assessment at Waltham First Parish church last Saturday. Now he is interested in learning more about the Committee.

Jim Mniece :

Allison Mooney

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

Welcome

Due to having guests we all introduced ourselves. Pat mentioned that there is a path for committee participation on teams and as a member.

Review and accept minutes from previous meeting(s)

A motion was made to accept 20jan11 minutes draft1.pdf but Leo noted that Allison Mooney should have been listed as a visitor and wasn't and so asked that acceptance be postponed until next meeting so he can correct that particular mistake, review the rest of the draft, and re-post for committee review.

Annual Report:

- A few copies were available for review.
- The dispositions of the interns' reports were discussed. As action, the interns' reports will be discussed at the next meeting and their dispositions will be decided.

It was suggested that Green Business report might be a baseline that can be expanded upon as more businesses quality (what that means was also discussed). Pat suggested: bestow recognition .. not certification. Eileen suggested a symposium where businesses can give other businesses ideas. Janna said the NSTAR-MassSave outreach meetings may be a vehicle for this. Eileen mentioned that Steve is going to have a few businesses attend his ward meeting.
- Kathy motioned to accept the current draft of the Annual Report. Eileen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- We decided send the draft to the Mayor, City Council, and to place a copy on the WEAC website.
- Kathy will take draft from Google site and put our logo on it.

Review and close follow-up items

Eileen will ask Anne Schweizer to report on WATCH barn raising.

PV Project (Andy)

The City Purchasing Agent is the key person talking with remaining vendors. Various issues like condition and possible upgrade of various roofs is still being discussed.

GC (Kathy)

In email exchange with Kathy, the DOER consultant, Leiran Biton, suggested kickoff by the end march. Leiran will work with us for 90 days from kickoff. At the end of that period will be a presentation of the GC action plan for Waltham. The biggest challenge immediately is how to engage City employees and the Mayor. We don't need that much work from them, but need information and cooperation. Both Kathy, through the consultant, and the rest of the GC subcommittee are working on this. Right now we're looking for people for the kickoff.

- Janna: possibly we should wait until PV contract is signed. This may make some delay which possibly we can handle.

Kathy said the biggest impact of a delay may be not submitting the CG application in the 2011 window (extending the process a year).

- Pat: do we need help? Kathy, not now, but people should consider going to the kickoff.

NSTAR-MassSave Audit Outreach

Barry reported, from the two outreach sessions he just hosted at 1st Parish Church: People were positive and thought the information presented was good. People who left will probably do something. 12 people attended the 1st session and 8 were at the second.

- Janna suggested that having the event means everyone contacted now knows about it (not just those who came).
- Barry mentioned that one person who came was landlord who said:
The Landlord has no incentive because " .. I don't pay the heat .. ." This landlord went on to say that the tenant would be free to actually do the upgrades which may cost some money and landlord would go along. But Barry pointed out that landlord could charge more rent if utilities are low. The landlord thought this would be ok.

Janna mentioned a list of energy action landlords as recognition could be carrot for landlords. Janna thinks it's hard for a tenant to be an energy-wise person and won't have information or capability to analyze a potential rental space. As a result, a list of energy action landlords could be effective.

- A rating system could be developed for energy efficiency of rental spaces. Springfield has this now.

Eileen will check w/ Phil to find out what's been reported by NSTAR.

Andy: improvement alone in property (with economic assistance) may be worth something to landlords.

- Janna said Brandeis interns (2 interns organizing canvassing for the Waltham NSTAR program) (working with getting landlords to reduce energy use) already have property value improvement as part of the incentive.

Janna: all of us should talk with our friends (neighbors) (pat said nobody would listen to her in her neighborhood). Pat: who do people listen to?

Barry: Home depot might let this program have a table at the store.

Upcoming events:

- Phil is at PTOs tonight.
- There is an event at Govt. Center, Feb 15 7pm hosted by the Waltham Conservation Commission.
- the head of WOCONA, Doris Donovan, is sending out info. by mail.
- Allison is hosting a house party on Mar 20.
- One attendee from 1st parish event will have a house party.
- Steve and Bob Logan will host an event for Wards 8 and 9 on 29 Mar 7pm. All Waltham residents are welcome.
- Ed Tarallo said he's considering hosting an event for Ward 2.

Discussion on List of "Issues" compiled by Leo:

- As action from the Jan-'11 meeting, Leo had drafted a list of problems people reported associated with scheduling or receiving an energy audit from this program (see "audit issues.pdf" under "NSTAR Community Outreach" in the Google Site File Drawers).
- There was substantial discussion on perceived problems and what the program "really is." The general feeling is we shouldn't take action on this preliminary list and continue to monitor the program. Andy said possibly we and interns can follow up in encouraging and helping people take action.

Additional items:

Posting for the meeting:

The WEAC meeting agendas have to be posted at clerk's office within 48 hours of meeting. Pat, who is often traveling can't always do this. Allison volunteered for this task.

Allison also drafted a WEAC flyer which we will review.

Next Steps/Action Items

Next Meeting – March 10, 2011 - Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

The committee adjourned at 9:00 PM.