

Waltham Energy Action Committee

Thursday 7pm, August 12, 2010

Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School St.

Minutes

Members Present:

Guy Compagnone, Pat Fox, Kathy Randel, Leo Keightley, Andy Greene, Eileen Zubrowski, Melissa Downs

Others Present:

Councillor Steven Rourke

Leonel Nava

Involved in energy & petroleum in Venezuela. 2 Masters degrees: nuclear & solar engineering
leonel_nava@msn.com

Galen Pardee

Intern with the Waltham Recycling Dept. Brandeis student - majoring in politics

(Agenda in blue text)

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

Welcome

Review and accept minutes from previous meeting(s)

Leo requested postponing this until next meeting when he will have a list of minutes in draft.

Update on PV project for the Municipal Buildings (Andy)

- Andy distributed a handout "Quick Facts - Municipal Center PV Proposal"
- He didn't get to speak to city finance committee on 02 August.
- The plan for the Municipal Buildings may loose out on some benefits due to delay (for example, tax credit ends after 31-Dec this year.)
 - About 5% of project needs completed by that time to qualify for the credit.
- Andy will make a presentation to dept heads 09-Sep. Buildings, Purchasing, Auditor, Law, Planning, and the Mayor, and possibly more departments will be represented.
 - Andy doesn't know if others (committee members for example) can be there.
- There will be an official presentation at the Council meeting: 20th or 27th of Sep.
- The Police building does need re-roofing, anyway
- The DPW roof is questionable.
- Buildings to get panels:
 - Police
 - DPW
 - Fire
- There is roofing language in the current revised proposal (page 5 of the handout)
- In discussions with the Federal Energy committee Andy has determined there can be a re-application for Municipal Center project.

- Andy suggested to Ralph the possibility of using a School building (new roof). Skip likes it. Ralph would like to keep the Municipal Center in the plan.

There are several available school buildings which Andy is beginning to look into. Sep 8, 10AM
Visit by Barego to look at school buildings.

- The MA state "Solar Carve-Out" plan has very big subsidies for big PV installations.
- For the Waltham proposal there will be two visits to the City Council:
Accept grant then approve Waltham lease of system.
- Steve suggested Andy be ready with answers to questions so the item doesn't get tabled while the council waits to get an answer from someone.
Call Councillor Kathleen McMenimen and get her fully briefed. Kathy is very "parliamentary."
Noon Wed (before Mon meeting) the briefing packet has to be delivered to the City Clerk.
- Guy suggested Andy get various graphics. Steve suggested the graphics go in the packet.
- Guy also suggested presenting background of Barego relative to others in similar business. 3 big players: Barego, Solera, Nexamp.
- Steve suggested inclusion of info. on systems other towns have installed. Get a Quote from someone involved.
- Steve suggested: Point out to finance committee that this first pass is approval of acceptance of the grant, not acceptance of the lease.
Andy said he had mentioned that to Councillor Marcou (Chair, Finance Committee).
Steve said to tell the entire Committee.

Green Communities Act

Update from Steve Rourke

Steve met with Councillor Ed Tarralo and Joanne Bissetta discussing requirements for GC.

Two big messages:

- Adopting the "Stretch Code" is the most politically complex of the requirements. In order to get their buy in, WEAc will have to educate builders and homeowners using workshops for which we can get help. Then there is the legislative phase. At the kickoff, in a public hearing, those homeowners and contractors could publicly endorse the Stretch Code.

Waltham Lumber hosted an event explaining Stretch Code and we could do similar things.

- This committee needs to apply for an assistance grant 03-sep. With that grant we would have a person from the State GC program to work with us.

The Mayor has to apply for this. We need a plan because mayor has to commit to meet the 5 GC requirements within a year. Many communities don't meet commitment, but there must be an attempt. Joanne and Steve can come to a meeting with the Mayor concerning this. Note that grant money is to get assistance to help us meet the 5 requirements.

Other details:

- The "As of right" requirement: We already have it, but we need to demonstrate it. Ralph Gaudet would describe routing for Energy Business related building permits (one page description of relevant permitting process).
- Establish energy use baseline and plans for fuel efficient vehicles: We will have to create a document for the Mayor to enact through the budget process.

Pat asked if WEAc members are on board for working on this and everyone agreed.

Pat asked Steve if we should prepare briefing packet for the council.

- Steve said it's a bit early. We should invite the council to education events. Eventually the Council has to approve adoption of the Stretch Code. Regarding the Grant for a consultant, since no money is involved, Council approval may not be required.

Pat, we may need an updated baseline audit to know what we reduce 20% from.

- **Free consulting help (Kathy)**

The State GC program consultant will, based on web site, have a 100 hour commitment

Besides the Mayor's letter, the community (Waltham) needs an energy action committee.

Steve asked: Can we get a sample letter? Kathy said yes.

- Mellissa said she will help move this along (Kathy vacation next 1.5 weeks).

Steve suggested: Find out how much \$ are communities getting and what we are likely to get.

Survey of municipal action plans compiled by intern Galen Pardee

Action plan

- **Spreadsheet review**

Galen had distributed the spreadsheet electronically to the Committee members.

Galen's charge was to review climate plans from other cities

Galen has text of questions he asked

Trends:

- Most towns used an ESCO
- Change stoplights and streetlights
- Com Solar: Cities get donations from citizens which are matched by state.
- Heat Islands: Hard to implement
- Green roofs (gardens found to be impractical except very small)
- Tree planting
- Sommerville working on Green Line extension which is intended to be very bike friendly .. maybe Waltham could consider extensions of bike lanes and paths.
- Trash: pay as you throw .. and recycle everything else
- Green leases: "incentivises" individual metering (split landlord/tenant responsibility for each meter). With cost split, both parties would want to reduce use.
- Prof. Eric Ohlson at Brandeis: talked about Cambridge plan. Most impact took away rent controls made landlords want to be competitive and purchase new energy efficient appliances to attract higher leases.
- Amherst: Coordinate City's and University Responses. Handheld devices which require chargers knocked plan off course.

- **Considering an ESCO**

no discussion

Discussions with Department Heads

- **New updates**

none

- **Goal: An intern will compile findings in September to post on website**

no discussion

Other new business

Discussion of action plan: Pat said we need some effort to pull this together. Should we wait for the

consultant? Possibly in part, but consultant only addresses the GC part. Our plan have other things.

Steve suggested creating an event to teach homeowners and citizens to save energy expenses. He would like to sponsor one for his ward and the event could be made available to all councillors. This may be outside the GC effort. Andy thinks PV is also outside GC effort: 20% is reduction of energy used by municipal buildings.

Pat suggested she head the effort to rough out single WEAc plan: GC effort and efforts outside GC.

Leonel: Do we have a plan for educating energy saving in school? People thought there may be available curricula we can suggest. Workshop for school or get on school meeting agenda. Workshops for teachers to earn credits.

Next Steps/Action Items

Next Meeting – Thursday, Sep 9, 2010 - Public Meeting Room, Government Center, 119 School Street

The committee adjourned at 9: PM.