

Draft Energy Committee Meeting Minutes of February 1, 2010

Members Present: Jack Harrod, Dave Harris, Joan Cobb, Mark Vernon, Bob Crane, Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator), Russell Aney, Frank Anzalone, Dave Sauerwein, Bill Spear

Members Absent: Mike Meller

Jack Harrod called the **MEETING TO ORDER at 7:00pm**. He noted that Russell Aney had sent some technical edits to the minutes of the last meeting and he had incorporated them into the latest draft. The Energy Committee agreed that this was acceptable.

IT WAS MOVED (Bob Crane) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to accept the minutes of January 4, 2010 as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Master Plan Schedule/Energy Chapter

Aney said that he was still working on the chapter and hoped to complete it during the present week. He said he would be giving the draft to the Energy Committee to review before giving it to the Planning Board. The Planning Board, Peter Stanley concurring, had, according to Aney, no problem with this slight delay.

NHMEAP; January 19, 2010

Harrod said that Aney and Laura Chesnut (Clean Air – Cool Planet) came to the Board of Selectmen’s meeting on January 19, 2010 to give an overview of NHMEAP. He said that the information presented was well-received. Harrod went on to say that he noted that an article came out in the InterTown Record after the meeting on the 19th, and carried no mention of the presentation by Aney and Chesnut. He has since sent a letter to Ms. Vogel (publisher) at the InterTown Record to mention this information. He noted that a revised version of this letter should be coming out in the next issue, which would bring to light NHMEAP and the Town’s participation in it.

Aney said that he and Ms. Chesnut explained at the meeting that there were a couple of phases involved in the program. The first phase would be to gather information to get a carbon footprint of the municipality. He said that some help is still needed to enter the data for the Town using the Energy Star Portfolio Manager software. This work should be done by the end of March and they hope to report to the Board of Selectmen on their findings during the beginning of April. Bill Spear said that there would possibly be someone from SIFE, a Colby-Sawyer student group, that could help with the data entry. Aney said he could create a program for these students to get them going.

Aney explained that after the first phase is complete, the Town will co-pay 10% towards a full building audit or an investment-grade building audit. They’ll use the audit for the least energy-efficient building in Town. Harrod said that even though Whipple Hall was probably the worst offender, it is not used as much now that the court is no longer there, so it may not make as much sense to make upgrades to it.

Aney said that they are going to come up with an action plan based on energy modeling and the energy audit. Both plans are for things they can do for the municipality and may be useful to determine a “game plan” for the Energy Committee in the future.

Schedule of “Energy Matters” Articles

Harrod said that when speaking with Ms. Vogel of the InterTown Record recently, she mentioned that whenever the Energy Committee wanted to submit another “Energy Matters” column as it had done in the past, she would be happy to have it.

Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants (EECBG)

Aney noted that there were several projects being proposed for EECBG money. These projects included the Kearsarge Regional School District's energy contract with Honeywell, a retrofit of the shell of Tracy Memorial Library, a lighting project for municipal buildings in Town, and the Elkins hydro-power feasibility study. Aney explained that New London had the unique ability to apply for EECBG on behalf of other entities in the Town. If the OEP decides they like a project for any town entities (college, hospital), they can fund it through the Town of New London. [The Town of New London must first agree to sponsor the project](#). Aney said that if the entities (such as Colby-Sawyer College) had some matching funds, they would have a better chance of winning some of the grant money.

Dave Sauerwein said that he felt it important to raise awareness and take steps forward with any Colby-Sawyer plan. They hope to wire one or two of the dorms to provide real-time energy monitoring perhaps by using a "Telle-motion display." This device, designed by Dartmouth College students, consists of an animated polar bear graphic which is affected by the energy consumption of the building(s). The more energy that is used, the more dire a situation the polar bear encounters. Sauerwein explained that this serves as a constant reminder and a way to bring awareness of energy consumption and conservation.

Aney said that another interesting initiative was a wind renewable energy project. Jennifer White, Sustainability Coordinator for Colby-Sawyer College, had pointed out to Aney a Diffuser Wind Turbine model, which was considered cutting edge technology. It consisted of a [design akin to a](#) jet turbine engine ~~which that~~ directs wind flow to create enhanced wind flow dynamics. It can [go-handle wind speeds](#) up to 70 mph and Aney believed there to be a few places in Town where these could work to generate energy. The price was \$12,500 for a demonstration-size model and \$75,000 for the largest ones. Sauerwein noted that birds don't tend to fly into these devices. Aney added that a benefit of the turbines was that they create very little noise. A typical turbine creates 70 decibels of noise which can be heard 100 meters away. These new turbines create only 25 decibels of noise. He shared that another benefit is that the turbines don't have to [be put it-](#)up 120 feet into the air. They can be affixed only 30' up or even on top of a building, due to the fact that these turbines do not create vibration. Aney said that even though there were probably no matching funds available for this type of investment from the Town, perhaps the college may have the resources available.

Aney suggested that if these projects were being done in conjunction with the college and the community as a community outreach project, they may get a discount on the price from the vendor, especially if the vendor can use it as a demonstration for other potential sites.

It was agreed that the Energy Committee found this to be a very interesting possibility and would be happy to work with the college in any way that it can to further the knowledge and perhaps obtain the technology.

Returning to the discussion of the EECBG projects, Aney reiterated that there were four projects being proposed from New London, coming in at more than \$500,000 worth of work. There is a need to figure out which projects are most important and to decide which projects need what- portion paid for through the EECBG. Kearsarge Regional School District was the largest project being proposed. Aney opined that they have a good chance of getting several hundred thousands of dollars for the work. He felt perhaps the library upgrades would be granted only about \$10,000. Aney explained that payback on a building retrofit ~~should-would probably need to~~ be in five years or less [in order to likely win a grant](#). Since there are matching funds for each of these projects, they have the opportunity that most Towns did not [to submit very competitive grant requests](#). Aney noted that February 15th was the deadline for applications, letters of intent already having been sent.

Peter Stanley asked where the matching funds from the Town would be coming from. Aney said there was a capital improvement fund [that could be used](#) for [the lighting project](#). There was \$7,500 [to match](#) ~~to~~-what [the](#) utilities would [pay-subsidize](#) for a \$15,000-\$20,000 project. He said that they would ask for a few thousand for that project.

Aney said that the school district was going to be using a contingent warrant article and would be asking for a \$2.9 million dollar bond. They would be entering into a 15-year energy savings contract with Honeywell. By going

through with these plans, they are able to generate about \$110,000 per year in energy savings. Based on that amount, they will see if they can make a pitch for \$300,000 - \$400,000 in funding.

Colby Sawyer Climate Action Plan

After reading Jennifer White's action plan, Harrod opined that a 50% reduction in carbon emissions in five years was an ambitious goal. Harrod said he felt the plan included nice graphics and interesting numbers.

Spear said that the synergy of the action plan was interesting. They had introduced "Recycle-Mania" last week. A Facebook page that had been created for the program showed about 125 students becoming "fans" of it in the first few hours of it going live. They want to increase their recycling and bring down the amount going to landfills. Optimally, they want to decrease their energy usage entirely. Harris noted that the momentum started with SIFE and then the Green Routes group is joining in as well. Harrod asked those on the committee to review the document. Sauerwein said he was happy to work with the Town and to hear the thoughts on how they can work together.

Aney said that he felt a great opportunity for this group working with Colby-Sawyer College was the notion of cooperative purchasing. A company called "One Block off the Grid" assists those buying solar panels in California. They organized a density of people interested in installing solar panels. Some marketing was done and then a bid was put out to solar installers for an opportunity to work with those people in a concentrated area. By doing this, they were able to get a 10-20% discount on the price of the panels. The organizer took a referral fee. Aney explained that this was helpful to the solar installation companies, as generally their customers are widely spread out. By having them in one concentrated area, they are able to set up an assembly line type of situation to complete the installation. Aney explained that "1BOG" uses volunteers/students to target [parts-of-townscommunities](#) to educate and recruit people to have solar installation done. If they get enough interest they could obtain some group purchasing discounts. Aney felt that the college could work in this capacity to assist with something like this.

Sauerwein extended an invitation to view the film "Kilowatt Ours" being shown in Wheeler Hall on February 9, at 8pm. It was being sponsored by a group called "Students for a Greener Campus."

Spear added that his Marketing Research class was working to reach students to inspire and motivate them to be environmentally conscious. While the project he is conducting currently with them is marketing based, it is helping them to see what messages seem to work the best to promote energy conservation.

Logo/Graphics

Mark Vernon showed the latest version of the committee's draft logo. It was oval in shape and looked like a sun. The letters "nEc" were written inside in white upon a yellow background. The committee liked the new logo. Vernon suggested that the committee write a letter of appreciation to Mike Repor, the Colby-Sawyer student who worked on the graphics for the logo. He felt that he did a good job and was a good help.

Stanley said that, from having a background in signage, it would be better to change the colors and not have the white letters on a yellow background as it would be hard to read. The committee agreed and Vernon said he would have Mr. Repor update the logo to reflect this idea.

Frank Anzalone

Harrod had indicated at the last meeting that Frank Anzalone was busy at this time with work and family commitments, but still wanted to be involved in the committee. He said that as an architect, Anzalone brings certain assets to the group and was happy to hear that he wanted to remain on the committee. Anzalone agreed with Harrod's remarks.

Email from Jim Rubens

Harrod explained that Mr. Rubens spoke at the presentation on nuclear power sponsored by the League of Women Voters. Harris noted that he had received an email from Rubens who urged the sending of letters to Senator Gregg regarding climate change. Harris shared that Senator Gregg has a good record on ecological issues. Harrod explained that he sent this email around to the group to see if anyone wanted to write a letter, or if they, as a committee, wanted to send something to Senator Gregg. Vernon believed that Rubens was soliciting letters from small businesses. Harrod said small business was the original focus of Rubens' group and then he got in touch with the New London Energy Committee. Rubens wants to get Gregg interested in doing something about climate change in the Senate. One advantage of the request was that they were not being asked to take any particular position on climate change.

Vernon asked if they should write a letter as a committee and then send it in as an Energy Matters article. Harrod said it would be a short letter and would not suffice as an article. Harris said that Rubens wanted to see if he could get an audience in New London. He felt it would be a good idea to schedule a talk if there was space and time available at the library. Rubens felt that if they could invite people to a discussion, they could get a wide variety of people to write letters. The actual talk by Rubens would last about 30 minutes.

Harrod opined that he didn't think scheduling a talk would work because there would not be a very large draw to the event. Harris said that if they can get the League of Women Voters in on the planning that would help to get the word out. Harrod felt they would need to advertise and wondered who would pay for it. He said that if they didn't advertise, they wouldn't get any attendees.

Harris indicated that Rubens chose the February 23rd date because it was one of two dates that Harris (a library trustee) offered when the library meeting room was available. Harrod felt that this was too short a notice to get an audience. Vernon said if there were champions present who wanted to promote the lecture they shouldn't hold back. Harris said that the committee members could send emails to people who they feel would be interested, and the League of Women Voters could do the same. Aney said they could promote it for people to come hear discussions on the energy bill. He felt that perhaps someone from Senator Shaheen's office could also attend. Aney added that if he (Rubens) wanted to talk about energy economy, they could tap into some of the people from UNH in support of the RGGI (Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative) bill. He said that he knew some of the professors there who were involved with this and could talk about it. Aney added that it could show that some things could be done legislatively that could benefit the economy and the government at the same time. He explained that this type of forum could encourage them to correspond with their Senator. If it is an interesting discussion, it may motivate some people to get involved.

Aney suggested inviting some people who would be campaigning for Senator Gregg's seat to come to the talk.

Harrod said that Gregg being a short-timer was something Rubens wanted to play upon. He could do something important and leave a legacy.

Harris and Aney agreed to work together to get some names and make some contacts in preparation for any presentation.

Aney went on to explain that there are New England Grassroots Grants available. While they are small grants, every energy committee that applied got funded last year. The grants were in the amount of \$1,500 – \$2,000 and the applications are due by February 15, 2010. Aney felt that perhaps Harris' idea for a "Green Fair" to serve as an outreach effort to involve the community would be an excellent idea to promote for the grant. They would need to explain how they would spend \$1,500 to organize and implement the fair. Aney recommended someone leading the effort to try and get some of this money. He added that they should explain that to kick off their event they would need this "shot in the arm" and then they could get sponsors for the event in the future from businesses such as RP Johnsons, LaValleys, and Clarke's Hardware.

Stanley wanted to bring up the fact that he had received a number of complaints about a freestanding photovoltaic array on Rowell Hill Road. There is no screening and it is a large structure made of a welded steel framework which is visible from the road. Stanley said that it may be desirable to come up with a proactive approach to this should it

come up again. Screening with planting plans to use in conjunction with these sorts of structures may become a requirement for their installation. Stanley said that it is not very nice-looking and should have been hidden by some sort of plantings. He said he'd pass the information along to the Planning Board and it may end up being a regulation to try to require that it not be as obtrusive as it is currently.

Anzalone said he lives in the area and that the complaints were coming from one person who is upset about it and is trying to get a group of people on board to complain. He said he didn't see the structure often.

Aney asked if there was any precedent for appeals in this situation. Stanley said that there was, similar to limiting colors on wind turbines. He wasn't saying that they can't install the structures, but that they need to give some thought to screening.

Stanley had another item to bring up. He said that in the last meeting where they were discussing the Master Plan, there was some discussion about building codes and the fact that there was no code enforcement in New London. He said that they don't spend a lot of money on enforcement, but there was really no way to effectively monitor this and engage people. Currently a building permit costs about \$2,000, not including a sewer hook-up, which could easily double the permit cost. Stanley said that they may be able to come up with an approach which provides some credit against fees for those who can certify that their building is at an Energy Star conservation level. The Town can't increase its staff for a building inspection department; however private third-party people who do code enforcement exist. Perhaps someone could develop something along those lines to certify that the builder or homeowner is entitled to a reduction in fee. Stanley saw this as a way to approach the code issue without expanding the government side of it. He said he hadn't talked to the Budget Committee or the Board of Selectmen about this, but it was an idea he had.

Stanley said that there was a bill before legislature this year [that](#) would establish a higher level building code for energy purposes that is going to be mandatory throughout the state for those towns that have adopted the code. He said there would be no mandate for the Town to adopt this, because the state cannot force an unfunded mandate.

Spear noted that PSNH picks up the tab for the [HERS Rating](#) audit [and provides additional incentives](#) to [establish encourage people to pursue](#) the Energy Star rating. Aney said if they throw the additional incentive of a town building permit reduction out there, it would be an interesting proposal to take to the Budget Committee. Stanley said it was an avenue that could be followed. Anzalone said it would work for new homes but not renovations [unless someone is doing a complete gut-rehab](#). Stanley said they'll be back at 12 new homes constructed this year, which is the average for New London. Aney asked if they would be able to offer \$500-\$1000 Energy Star credit towards new homebuilders. Stanley said that the amount would have to come as a suggestion from the Energy Committee.

Aney said new code goes into effect April 1st. This new code is 99% of the way to the Energy Star code. It would be useful to tell those constructing homes to get the Energy Star rating and it would amount to a \$500 discount upon certification. Stanley stressed the importance of working with the builders to get in on the process. He said that a huge mistake in the deal was exempting affordable housing. Those who can afford it the least will end up paying more for energy costs, which did not seem to make sense.

Stanley suggested approaching the subject with the Board of Selectmen before they go forward with anything on this matter, as they will want to have time to digest it. Aney said he would put something into the Master Plan chapter regarding this idea.

Vernon asked Harris if he still planned to go forward with the "Green Fair." Harris answered in the affirmative. He believed the best day to hold the event would be the day after the Green Building Open House, which was the first weekend in October. The Green Fair would be held that Sunday.

Harrod proposed that the next meeting of the Energy Committee would be held on March 1st at 7pm.

IT WAS MOVED (David Sauerwein) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to adjourn the Energy Committee meeting of February 1, 2010. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Reviewed:

Jack Harrod

Chairman

New London Energy Committee