

**New London Energy Committee
Minutes of November 2, 2009
7:00pm**

Members Present: Jack Harrod, Joan Cobb, Russell Aney, Dave Sauerwein, Mark Vernon, Bob Crane, Dave Harris

1. Minutes of October 6th Energy meeting

Harrod said that he had incorporated some edits from Aney into the draft. There were no further changes or comments.

**IT WAS MOVED (Mark Vernon) AND SECONDED (Russell Aney) to approve the October 6th, 2009 Energy Committee minutes as amended.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. Master Plan schedule

Harrod noted that he had sent the draft Energy chapter of the new Master Plan to the committee, which had been drafted by Town Planner, Ken McWilliams. Harrod commented that he was surprised to see 30 pages of information that had been assembled by McWilliams. He noticed that it had been included in the chapter to consider, at Town Meeting, a warrant article on property tax exemptions for those who install alternate energy systems in their homes. Harrod indicated that it had already been the position of the Board of Selectmen to not do give a tax incentive for installing these types of systems. Their suggestion was to not add the extra value of the system into their assessments. The rationale of the Board of Selectmen was that they could not see giving tax incentives to people who could afford to install expensive energy saving systems when other people were scrimping to just be able to pay their winter heating bills. Harrod said that McWilliams had commented that 72 other towns in New Hampshire had enacted this tax break and believed New London ought to follow suit. Harrod noted that the next session of the Planning Board, which will review this chapter for inclusion in the Master Plan, would be on Tuesday, November 10th at 7:00pm. He encouraged as many committee members as possible to attend the meeting to help make the chapter as accurate and as significant to New London as possible. Harrod confessed that what had been put together by McWilliams was not what he had expected.

Russ Aney opined that he would throw out 90% of what had been written and start over. He reported that he had looked at other towns' energy chapters within their respective Master Plans. He said that this chapter shouldn't be a reference piece, but more a source of recognition of the importance of energy savings opportunities and the role for an Energy Committee in the town. Harrod made it clear that they shouldn't be confrontational about what McWilliams had put together. Aney felt that the lengthy chapter would most likely be a waste of people's time and after reading it, would probably miss the ideas that would be important to convey within a document such as a Master Plan. Aney said that the State Office of Energy Policy had said previously that it could not enforce any policies unless they had been incorporated into the town Master Plans. It was suggested to intervene with Stanley before the meeting to give him a heads-up about the committee's feelings regarding the present chapter.

Aney felt that the committee should definitely show up at the meeting and asked if they should act individually or as one voice. Mark Vernon opined that they should be one voice. Harrod agreed. He thought they should focus on the points at the end of the chapter that the town should work

towards in efforts to conserve and protect energy and resources. He agreed that there was a lot of information to get through in the chapter and that the reader may not “see the forest through the trees.” Vernon asked if the format that had been used in this chapter was similar to other chapters already written in the Master Plan. Bob Crane said that it was similar but that some chapters differed in small ways. Aney felt that the chapter that had been written referred to national and state-wide statistics because McWilliams didn’t know what to incorporate about energy information from the town. Vernon asked if it would be too late to draft another version. Harrod said that it was the plan for the meeting to voice their concerns and have parts amended or re-written to their preferences. Crane noted that a lot of the information stated in the chapter had been found on the internet (i.e. Wikipedia).

Aney brought with him about five other energy chapters from Master Plans from other towns to share. He asked Harrod to give these to the Planning Board to give them an idea of the type of chapter they would prefer. Aney felt that there were some other good templates that could be used. Harrod suggested bringing some of the other energy chapter to the meeting. He confessed that he would hate to not to give McWilliams a “heads-up” and perhaps would talk to Peter Stanley about their feelings and plans for the chapter.

Joan Cobb said that the technique that is used for the Master Plan was to share the goals, visions and what they see ahead for the town, based on the results of a town-wide survey. The information is presented to the Planning Board, and they are the ones who approve the content. Aney felt that the chapter wasn’t specific to New Hampshire or New London. Harrod said that he would contact Stanley about this.

Aney shared that some of the other Master Plan energy chapters articulate the existence of an energy committee. He felt that this was an opportunity for them to gain respect in the community and generate value for the organization. He added that he liked some aspects of several different chapters that he had reviewed. Aney said that he would forward electronic versions of the other energy chapters to the committee members so that they could review them and gain some insight. Vernon thought perhaps the committee members could send Harrod their comments on their likes/dislikes so that they could compile a list and get a more solid idea of what they would like to see in the New London Master Plan’s Energy chapter.

3. “Button Up NH”

Harrod said that he had sent an email around about this program. He noted that three workshops conducted by “SERG” (Sustainable Energy Resource Group) were planned to take place in New Hampshire’s Upper Valley, and were to be conducted by SERG’s by Bob Walker. One would be held in Canaan, one in Enfield and one in New London. Harrod told Walker that the NLEC would welcome him to speak in the town. From the dates suggested, the committee felt that Dec. 9th or 10th would work the best but that it would depend on the library’s availability. Walker wanted to speak in New London because the town is a focal point for a broader community. Aney said that he hoped that the Cool Air/Clean Planet group would publicize this. He thought that it was an opportunity for New London to get out ahead. Aney said that having Walker speak to the town would bring energy efforts beyond the town as a governmental program and reach out into the community. Harrod remarked that they would need some publicity. He said that he would get in touch with Annette at the InterTown Record and they may need to take out an ad in the Kearsarge Shopper. Dave Sauerwein said that if they can attach the date they’ve selected to the emailed notice that Harrod would send around, he would send it to the staff at Colby-Sawyer College. Aney said that he could post the event on the Sunapee website and would also include it on various blogs. The committee favored the Thursday date (December 10).

Vernon asked if the webinars associated with the event would still happen. Harrod said that at 7pm on Monday, November 9th he would welcome participation from anyone who was available for the webinar. He said that if they wanted to take part in the webinar, to send him an email with their phone number so they could participate. He thought that the webinar would be a useful exercise.

4. Municipal Energy Assistance Program (NHMEAP). Aney reported that the first 31 towns had been selected and that he hoped New London would be selected in the second round. He said that they were lobbying to be one of the next 17 and noted that a letter was being sent by the Library Trustees in support of New London's inclusion in the program. Harrod thought that Tom Galligan, Colby-Sawyer president, would be in favor of this effort and thought a letter from the college might help the town's chances of being chosen.

5. Schedule of "Energy Matters" articles. Harrod asked if anyone wanted to submit an article. Vernon said that he would like to write one but would wait until later on in the agenda to talk about it. Aney said that perhaps they could write an article about the League of Women Voters' lecture series. He thought that he would write an article about the presentations of Joanne Morin and Cameron Wake and thought it should highlight a link to an enhanced energy website for the Town of New London. Vernon thought that perhaps an article about the "Button Up" program would be appropriate. Aney asked who would be the editor for the articles. Harrod said that he would be happy to do serve as the editor. He said that the articles for the InterTown have to be a 500 word maximum and that he would look them over and send them to Annette. Harrod explained that the "Button-Up" program would be handled as a press release and not as an "Energy Matters" article.

6. Colby-Sawyer developments/sustainability coordinator/possible interns. Sauerwein reported that Jennifer White, a graduate of Colby-Sawyer College, had returned to teach and to fill the role of sustainability coordinator. He said that she had been hired as a half-time professor teaching two classes per semester and half-time sustainability coordinator. During the summer, she would act as a full-time sustainability coordinator. Sauerwein said that he didn't want to commit Ms. White to doing anything more at this time, but he would see what he could do to get an article written, even if he had to write it himself. He said that he has invited Ms. White to attend the Energy Committee meetings but that he told her as long as the meetings were held on Monday nights, that he would attend even if she did. Sauerwein said that he and Ms. White have signed up for a wind-energy webinar together to consider this technology for the college. They are also working towards obtaining a wind generator at the college. He added that the college had a radio station which would be useful if the town lost power and needed a means of communication. He added that the generator needed to support the radio station as well as various other components that would be necessary in an emergency.

Harrod explained that it would be useful to have some interns from the college do some work with the EECBG (Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants) program, should the town be awarded some grant money. Sauerwein said that his wife is now working in the internship office of the college and he would be willing to pass that request on to her. Aney said it would be good to have help from such a student to get a picture what the town consumes for energy. Sauerwein felt that this seemed like a project that could be handled by the intern office.

Aney asked if there were outreach projects required by students in the College, as some of the work that they needed accomplished could serve as such a project. Sauerwein said that the students did have such projects required but thought that they had most likely already chosen their projects. He explained that they choose one client per year and work as a team to help them.

Sauerwein added that there was another group on campus called “Students for a Greener Campus.” He said that this was a club that was presided over by a student by the name of Andrew Francis. Sauerwein shared that Francis asked if he could share some information with the energy committee. Sauerwein said that he encouraged Francis to do so. He wasn’t sure what the plans were from the club, but Francis wanted to share some information with the town. Aney added that Bill Spear said he would check on the availability of students from the college’s SIFE program to help the committee but hadn’t heard back yet. Sauerwein said that he would check in with Bill Spear. Aney said that he had a lot of projects that students could work on.

Harris said that he had talked about co-generation and knew a gentleman in Massachusetts who dealt with this technology. He said that this person was very surprised at the outcome of the information that had been gathered from the energy usage from the college. He was especially surprised that the college’s cost for propane was so low. Harris said that he would get more information from this study soon.

7. League of Women Voters energy lecture series. Harrod said that Joanne Morin and Cameron Wake had spoken recently and this week would be the topic of nuclear energy. He added that an NRC representative would be there and that Energy Committee member, Mike Meller, would be chairing the presentations. Aney wondered if the committee could help get the word out for these lectures. Harrod said that there was a good turn-out and felt that interest was building for the series. Sauerwein thought it would be good to have something on a card to hand out at the next lecture to advertise the “Button Up” workshop being given by Bob Walker. Harrod agreed that this was a good idea and said that he would try to arrange for something to be created.

8. “No idling” signs. Harrod noted that the sign was up at the library. Mark Vernon also indicated that a “no idling” sign was also up at the Colonial Plaza, in addition to the ones at the Post Office and the Transfer Station. Sauerwein said he would look into places they could put “no idling” signs on campus.

9. Liaison with Tracy Library/planned library renovations. Dave Harris said that the window replacement project was on hold until March. With Aney’s expertise on energy, the library decided not to replace the windows with the dual pane sort, but to replace the storm windows and seal the lead-weight chambers from the outside so that no air would pass through. Aney explained that the payback on replacing windows wasn’t favorable. He said that the bigger payback would be on replacing the siding. They are currently working on the application for a grant which would be favorable for the town. The grant would be for windows, insulation and siding for the library. Everything that was highlighted in the previous audit that hadn’t been done yet could possibly be done with this grant money. Aney said that this work would be done to the older parts of the building shell. Harris said that the deadline for the grant application was December or January and the money would come in March.

10. Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants (EECBG). Aney said that something the town was participating in was a complimentary lighting audit from PSNH for businesses and municipalities. He said that he personally walked the representative from PSNH through some of the buildings in the Town and their lighting situations were observed to see if there were energy savings opportunities. If there were, they would get a 50% discount on the retrofit of the lights that were hard-wired into the system. The town could finance the remainder of the cost on their monthly PSNH bill. Harrod said that in the last meeting Peter Stanley said there would be an accounting problem with the billing, but that this could be figured out at a later date. They are presently working on the analysis and Aney has to send some historical utility bills to PSNH’s

contractor for the analysis to be completed. Aney gave some examples of things that could save energy that they observed. The library's exit signs, for example, have fluorescent bulbs which use about 20 watts. If replaced with LED exit signs, they would use only .5 watt. He added that PSNH will only retrofit lighting and won't redesign. Any portable fixtures that plug into an outlet are not eligible for this program. For any portable lighting fixtures with incandescent bulbs, the town should consider purchasing compact fluorescent bulbs to save on energy.

Aney noted that the biggest opportunity for energy savings would be at the fire station. Even though it is a new building, it wasn't built with lighting energy efficiency opportunities in mind. He added that the police station had some opportunities as well. Aney explained that this program was not just for municipalities. The college, local businesses, and the school district could use the program as well. He thought that awareness was raised and interest was generated for some retrofitting in the town office. Whipple Hall was also one location that needed help but it would be difficult, as it was a historic building. Aney reported that the report would be back by the middle of this month. He added that PSNH and its contractor wanted to get things installed by the end of this year because they have quotas to fill. He said that they may benefit from some good deals to entice them to act quickly.

11. Other business.

Harrod said that there was a Local Government Association (LGA) conference on November 18th and there were some sessions that were devoted to energy issues. Town administrator Jessie Levine had informed Harrod that money was available if anyone from the committee wanted to attend. Harrod didn't see anything on the agenda that he hadn't already seen covered in past conferences but wondered if others on the committee would like to attend. Ms. Levine told Harrod that she was attending two days of the conference. Harrod said that Ms. Levine would register whoever wanted to go.

Harrod indicated that the same day as the conference, Bob Walker of SERG (Sustainable Energy Resource Group) would be hosting a social event in Hanover in the evening. Harrod said he would like to attend this event so they could keep a relationship going, given that SERG and Walker would be conducting the December 10 "Button Up" workshop in New London.

Vernon said that at the last meeting they had talked about coming up with a logo for the committee. He said that he would be willing to draft up a couple of ideas for a logo. Aney agreed that this was a good idea. Sauerwein said he had a graphics arts student who he thought would be able to work with Vernon to come up with some ideas. Vernon welcomed the cooperation of the student and asked Sauerwein to forward the student's information to him so they could get started sharing ideas.

Aney thought the Energy Committee should have its own web page once the logo was created. He felt that this would allow for more freedom on design and content. He said that he would be learning from Linda Jackman on how to maintain the information on the present energy page. He would love to take the lead on the creation of this page and would welcome assistance from a student at the college. Some feedback capabilities would be included within this new page and they could employ some usage tracking statistics to monitor the popularity of the site. This would help them to see what people were interested in.

Harrod commented that the way it is now, the committee has a page on the official town website. It would want to keep this page because it was its official status and link to the town. If there was additional material that could be linked to another page, that would be good. Crane said that this was a possibility because the Conservation Commission has a separate site and he was the

webmaster. Their information could be accessed from both sites. Crane said that the town's system was very limited. When the town went to the present system, the Conservation Commission couldn't work within those constraints. The town provides the money for their own website, which is about \$14/month, and it comes out of the budget for the Conservation Commission. Crane added that the fire department, police and the Conservation Commission all have their own web pages in addition to the one supported by the town. They use "Yahoo for Small Businesses."

Joan Cobb asked if she needed the Energy Committee's approval to talk to the League of Women Voters about the no-mowing project and to explain what the committee did near the entrance to the Transfer Station (the "natural landscaping" plot). She said the League was interested in her giving a presentation on the topic. The committee gave its approval for her to proceed.

11. Next Meeting. Harrod asked if anyone had any problems with a December 7th date. No one did, and so the next meeting was scheduled for that date, Monday, December 7, at 7:00 p.m..

**IT WAS MOVED (Dave Sauerwein) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to adjourn the Energy Committee meeting of November 2, 2009.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Reviewed by
Jack Harrod
Chairman
New London Energy Committee