

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee Tuesday, 5/28, 7 pm, Tracy Hall

Attending: Susan Hardy, Rob Gere, Linda Gray, Suzanne Leiter, Norm Levy, Charlie Lindner

Guests: Phoebe Howe, Efficiency VT; David Lemal, Norwich Lions; Erich Rentz

Phoebe Howe of Efficiency VT outlined outreach to private rental unit owners in Norwich that she will oversee starting in mid-June. She is starting with a list of about 50 property owners from the Norwich assessor office. The goal of the program is to offer a personal, hands-on approach and become a long-term resource for the property owners. Phoebe has printed the letter to the property owners and mailing envelopes, ready to be mailed 6/13. Linda will circulate the spreadsheet of Norwich property owners to NEC members to review for possible personalization.

Ongoing projects:

- outreach for Solarize Norwich 2019 will end as of 5/31. So far in 2019, 21 households have committed to new or more solar; another 25 households are on the 2019 "prospects" list. Norm suggested the need to keep an eye on the ongoing role of distributed solar.

- the RFP for electrical installation for the EV charging station should go out this week.

- EVT has sent the last update on the "ButtonUp Hero" weatherization campaign; Linda will review and follow up with residents as needed.

- re 5% reduction in Town fossil fuel use, Aaron Lamperti emailed a calculation of the Town's baseline fossil fuel use: He has data for all three buildings (Tracy Hall, town garage and public safety) for 2017-2018, so is using that as the baseline year. His calculation is 414.1 metric tons of carbon for 2017-2018, so the goal for 2018-2019 is $.95 * 414.1 = 393.4$ metric tons. A next step is for the Town to finalize an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) to select an energy performance company to do an audit of all the Town buildings and make recommendations for energy improvements (such as integrated building controls, changes to heating/cooling, insulation, lighting, solar energy).

- re Transportation, we will hear by the end of June on the application for a NWC grant for e-bike loan, bike racks, fit-it station. With regard to the fix-it station, Susan will confirm with Town staff on permitting and getting help with Public Works staff on installation. Susan also reported on the UV Energy Roundtable discussion on transportation. Here is a link for videos and slides from the presentations: vitalcommunities.org/energy/roundtable

The Committee looked at a sample reusable, washable trash bag <https://www.planetwiseinc.com/planet-wise-reusable-trash-bag.html> that Norm suggested as a possible give-away/prize during the next fiscal year. Reaction was muted, no consensus to pursue.

Linda announced that another UV EV Expo is being organized for 9/14 at the Dothan Brook School in Wilder. uvevexpo.org

Charlie proposed a campaign idea for 2020, "20 in '20"...a challenge for residents and businesses to reduce their carbon emissions by 20% in 2020. Members' reaction was positive. This could provide an umbrella under which regular NEC outreach on weatherization and solar fit right in, as well as incorporating other actions such as changes in transportation, diet, food waste and composting, and more. When residents say they can't weatherize or go solar, we can share a list of 10 other actions they can do. The NEC can invite other groups in town to collaborate on this. There are various online carbon footprint calculators that we can highlight, and this is an ideal way to get people to use the Energy Dashboard. A subcommittee of Charlie, Linda, and Norm will develop details for the next NEC meeting.

David Lemal asked the NEC to consider having a booth at the Lions Club Fair, scheduled for 7/18-21 (Thu-Sun). Committee members are interested, IF we can come up with an engaging way to attract people to the booth. Possibilities include a bike to pedal to show some energy equivalent, cookies baked by the Solaflect tracker oven, a coupon for winners at the bingo tent. TO-DO: NEC members to report whether they will be away during the Fair dates.

Also, the town parade is scheduled for 9/21; it is not a Lions event, but Richard Neugass of the Lions Club is on the organizing committee and may be able to steer its theme to climate action.

Updates:

- The enhanced energy planning working group has finished meeting as a distinct group; further additions and revisions to the still-draft energy chapter will be done through the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is planning community outreach events this summer on various topics in the Town Plan; Linda will track their discussions on energy-related topics.

- the Energy Action Network is seeking a grant through which they could fund energy coordinators for up to 10 Vermont towns; Linda will track progress on this.

- the VT PUC has opened a proceeding to "consider ways to facilitate the review of net-metering systems, including net-metered solar projects. The goal is part of the Commission's ongoing effort to clarify and streamline the review process wherever possible, while also ensuring that the Commission and all stakeholders can review the potential impacts of a project before the Commission determines whether a project serves the public good." The PUC's initial proposed revisions are attached. Documents related to this rulemaking can be found in the Commission's online document management system, known as ePUC, which can be accessed at <https://epuc.vermont.gov> (Case No. 19-0855-RULE). The PUC will hold workshops; Linda will try to keep us informed about that schedule.

- from Greentech Media, an Analysis of Net Energy Metering Policy Changes in the United States: http://www2.greentechmedia.com/l/264512/2019-05-23/9dry6?utm_source=MayResource

- VECAN did a webinar on "Reducing Food Waste as a Climate Solution" video is at <https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/7568589843874456076>. Here are some of the resources that were discussed:

- [Josh Kelly and Anne Bijur's Slides About Food Waste and the Climate Connection.](#)
- [Robin Orr's Slides on Community Engagement around Food Waste.](#)
- [Information about the State of Vermont's Recycling Initiatives.](#)
- How to [Contact Your Solid Waste District](#)
- [FoodShift.net's tips to reduce your personal food waste.](#)
- Meal planning and storage tips from [SavetheFood.com](#).

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, 6/25/19.

submitted by Linda Gray