

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee Tuesday, 7.23, 7 pm, Tracy Hall

Attending: Rob Gere, Susan Hardy, Linda Gray, Aaron Lamperti, Norm Levy

Status and planning for ongoing projects:

* Solarize Norwich 2019 results: 28 households have committed to new or more solar (+172 kW installed capacity); another 24 households are on the 2019 prospects list; 45 kW solar array at Starlake Lane has been completed, 150kW solar array near Union Village Rd and Bradley Hill Rd is under construction (more than half of these panels were purchased by Norwich residents), and the 500kW solar array on the Fire District parcel off Rte 5 will begin construction soon. Linda will pitch a news story about this variety of solar development.

* Transportation

- details are being pinned down for the collaboration with Local Motion and the Norwich Library on the e-bike loan program. It is set to run from 8/8 through the month, and could be extended if another Upper Valley loan partner is not identified by Vital Communities. For the Huntley Meadow parking lot, the bike fix-it station is here and the bike rack is still to be ordered. There was agreement to wait until the bike loan program is done to conclude that that portion of the NWC grant will not be needed.

- Also agreement that the NEC should follow up on the idea (from Town Meeting) of developing bike paths. One potential funding mechanism is to add a penny to the tax rate and devote these funds to energy-saving projects. Linda will put this on the agenda for the August meeting.

- the UV EV Expo is scheduled for Sept 14; Linda will continue to post about the event on the list serv.

* Weatherize - Linda did a reminder email to some of the rental owners and the EVT staffer ended up with a full day of home visits. Aaron was one such homeowner and reported that the interaction was helpful. Linda did a second reminder email to a different subgroup, so most of the rental homeowners have been contacted twice.

* EV charging station - Town Manager Herb Durfee will select an installer this week; installation may be completed in August, depending on schedules.

* 5% reduction in Town fossil fuel use - responses to the Request for Qualifications for an energy performance contractor are due 7/29. Linda, Aaron, and Herb will review them in August, with the goal of selecting a contractor to review the Town buildings over the fall, with recommendations in time for consideration at Town Meeting 2020.

Updates:

* Linda will order more Solarize stickers, as the original order of 500 has been used up (220+ for the "sun pops" in 2017)

* There are now two possible sources of funding for a town staff energy coordinator (shared with 1-3 other towns): 1) grant funding from the Energy Action Network and 2) Two Rivers Ottaquechee Regional Commission. Linda will monitor these options.

* Town Plan - next meetings of Planning Commission are July 25 and August 22; a Public Workshop on Land Use, Energy, and Transportation is scheduled for 8/1, 6:15-7:45 pm, Tracy Hall

* Still no schedule posted on the PUC web site for workshops on proposed changes to net-meter rules.

Discussion of the new "20% for 2020" challenge:

- * members reviewed materials drafted by Charlie Lindner: an action pledge, an action checklist, and web resources. Agreement to consistently use pounds to ID the units of CO2 saved and to aim to add money saved. Agreement to highlight composting via drop-off at the transfer station, rather than education on home composting.

- * the Norwich parade (9/21) will be part of Family Day on the Green. with a 'secondary' theme relating to the environment. There was agreement that this was enough for the NEC to target these events for launch of the 20 for '20 challenge. There was brainstorming about elements for the parade, and agreement to use actions from the checklist drafted by Charlie Lindner (EVs, bikes, solar, clothes lines, composting, weatherization), with consistent signage highlighting pounds of CO2 saved.

- * Linda will get drafts of printed materials and web pages ready for the August meeting.

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, 8/27/19.

submitted by Linda Gray