

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee Tuesday, 4/27/21, 7 pm, via Zoom

Attending: Linda Gray, Susan Hardy, Aaron Lamperti, Suzanne Leiter, Norm Levy, Charlie Lindner, Erich Rentz
Guests: Rob Gere

Linda Gray gave the statement of Act 92 compliance. The 3/23 meeting minutes and the 4/27 agenda were approved by consensus.

Aaron Lamperti was nominated for chair by Norm Levy, seconded by Linda Gray; unanimously approved. Charlie Lindner was nominated for vice chair by Linda, seconded by Aaron; unanimously approved.

There was agreement to set up a Google Drive shared folder for committee files; Aaron and Linda will coordinate that.

The Norwich schedule for e-bike loans 6/13-7/4 was confirmed. The transfer day to send the bikes on to the next town, Lebanon, falls on 7/4 and the Lebanon contact has asked for flexibility, given the holiday. She will confirm with Linda before the Norwich schedule is entered into the online reservation system. Linda will invite 2020 borrowers to volunteer, and five committee members said they would be available. The volunteer schedule can be set in late May/early June. The schedule spreadsheet will be added to the shared folder.

There was brief discussion of whether local bike shops will convert a regular bike to an e-bike; consensus that no local shops do this. An info sheet on the loan bikes and local and online bike resources will be given to all borrowers again in 2021.

About 12 people have responded to the Eat Low & Local listserv posts and their names forwarded to the four partner-farms (Crossroad, Honey Field, Sweetland, and Hogwash). This is fewer than last year, but the campaign provides the opportunity to educate residents about the connection between food choices and emissions. Rob Gere volunteered to take photos of the farms to add to the web page, to highlight the local connection.

Following up on the inquiry from Roger Arnold about reviewing Town parcels for solar hosting (in parallel to the Planning Commission's review for affordable housing), Erich Rentz has done some mapping on a short list of parcels. A few questions remain; Linda will contact the planning director on that, and then a list with maps can be submitted to the town manager and the planning director.

The town manager received the committee's memo on priorities for the shared town energy coordinator, Geoff Martin. He provided it and his own memo to the Selectboard in the packet for the 4/28 meeting, endorsing the recommended priorities and suggesting Linda Gray as the Norwich rep to the Steering Committee for our first year working with Geoff. There was consensus in support of the town manager's recommendation.

2021 "Electrify Everything" virtual events: Linda reported that the 4/21 webinar with Efficiency VT on heat pumps went well, with 30 participants (about 6 from Norwich), excellent content from EVT, and good Q/A. The evening version will take place 4/28. A recording may become available. Erich reported that the presentation on electric lawn equipment is set for May 19, with Steve Wisbaum of Mow Electric! <https://mowelectric.org/>, Lynnwood Andrews from the Norwich Conservation Commission

and a local lawn contractor using electric equipment. Erich will confirm details with the presenters. Publicity should start the first week of May, through listserv posts, info on the NEC web site, and the sandwich board.

Aaron shared a draft case study of the Racusin home; feedback was to make the charts for each case study as comparable as possible (headers, labels). Discussion about a third case study; Norm will contact the firm that serviced his geothermal system for possibilities.

Linda reported that all four Solarize installers are on board for 2021; pricing for all has been updated on the web site.

Linda reported on plans for a project this fall with Window Dressers, building interior window inserts: a collaboration with Sustainable Hanover is confirmed; November 11-17 at the parish hall of the Norwich Congregational Church is reserved; the goal is to build about 200 total inserts; Linda will begin outreach to entities who can contact low/moderate income households, then do public outreach; 6-8 volunteers are needed by July for measuring, she will recruit via the listserv. Some fundraising may be needed to cover costs for households that don't pay the full amount; this can be done through direct, private solicitations this year; would be a good proposal for a NWC grant in 2022.

Other business:

- Susan Hardy reported from the UVTMA group: Woodstock is doing a feasibility study for microtransit, Advance Transit will have two electric buses by the end of 2022.
- Aaron noted that the Town will receive about \$1 million in federal American Rescue Plan funds over three years.
- Linda reported on contact with Green Mtn Power about a new pilot program creating resiliency zones <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2021/02/25/vermont-utility-building-microgrid-to-provide-backup-power-for-town/> The current pilot involves three towns; the GMP contact now has Norwich on his list for further discussion; she has shared this with the town manager and planning director.
- Linda noted there was good information shared in a TRORC webinar on planning/zoning actions that Towns can take on energy goals, and suggested this as another area to work with Geoff Martin on.
- Aaron noted that he is now working as an energy auditor with EEI Services and would recuse himself if this presented a conflict of interest for any committee discussions/actions.
- Linda reported that the Hartford Climate Action team has scheduled public presentations of their climate action plan in June and July; she will circulate to committee members the email on this.

Public comment: there was none.

The committee thanked Linda for her service as committee chair; she praised members for their strong contributions.

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, 5/25, 7 pm via Zoom; the agenda will include discussion of the TRORC Energy Progress Report Card with Geoff Martin.

submitted by Linda Gray