

DRAFT AGENDA, Special Meeting, Article 36 Task Force

Wednesday, Nov. 4, 7 pm at Tracy Hall and via Zoom or telephone.

The Article 36 Task Force will hold a special meeting to present a public outline of a draft report to the Select Board, to hear initial public comment, and assign a member to follow up with the next draft. This will be a brief meeting to help ensure that drafting is conducted in open public meetings. There will be additional opportunities for public comment.

Presentation of the first draft outline, brief discussion of its elements, initial public comment on the process, invitation for the public to comment in writing, and assignment of task force member(s) for next draft are the only business on the agenda at this meeting, subject to consensus by task force. The task force operates by consensus and no recorded votes or decisions on final recommendations are expected.

In the event of **connection issues**, contact Aaron Lamperti at aaron.lamperti@gmail.com or 802-526-2463 (or Jack Cushman at 603-306-7017)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84733103984?pwd=VE8xeUtBRWJjcURHYkVPT3lPRVFrZz09>

Meeting ID: 847 3310 3984

Passcode: 636697

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In March 2019, the Town of Norwich advised, through the passing of Article 36, all Town Officials to “take immediate and sustained efforts to gradually and continually reduce the Town’s direct use of fossil fuels, beginning at a rate of no less than 5% per year starting in the 2019-20 and continuing until they are eliminated entirely.” This task force will initiate work towards an aggressive and comprehensive work plan to achieve the elimination of direct fossil fuels in the Town of Norwich.

Committee Members:

Jack Cushman (Chair)

Aaron Lamperti (Vice Chair)

Ernie Ciccotelli

Rob Gere

Eva Rosenbloom

For the convenience of the public, this agenda includes (below) a current version of the text of our draft outline which we will discuss at this meeting. It is not to be construed as a final work product. The working draft will be distributed at the time of the meeting and will be published on our publicly available Google URL:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19jhlhaVpcRAQr_VvRBrN7F4-4YUXa89t

WORKING DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Executive Summary: 1 page, nine bullet points

- Voters recognized the urgent need to cut fossil fuel use when they passed Article 36.

- Sources of fossil fuel use are of two kinds. Percentage summary of engines and furnaces.
- Getting to zero means pathways for both categories. Priority should be given to already available technology.
- Building options.
- Vehicle and equipment options.
- Institutional habits need to focus on climate action. Recommendation for “climate impact statements”.
- We need to be on our toes in arranging federal and state financing.
- The task force sought consensus rankings of potential actions. This tells us to emphasize the following three things most urgently: Thing One, Thing Two and Thing Three (to be determined by consensus)
- Norwich is falling behind its neighbors in the region, and Vermont as a state is falling behind some neighboring states, in the urgency with which we address climate. However, all are promising to move in the same direction. We should engage better at regional and state levels.
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(open to suggestions during later drafts)

Introduction:

The scientific urgency of action, the local, state and federal context, and the mandate to cut direct municipal fossil fuel use rapidly with a target of eliminating them. Note also the opportunity to be a leader for the town and the state in demonstrating the technology and showing the resolve to act. 100 words

History

Article 36. The development of a proposal for Tracy Hall. Article 8, its passage and reversal in the face of global pandemic. Selectboard names ART36TF. Initial report in August. Consensus process. Drafting this report. 100 words

Policy framework: Citing latest Vermont Climate Assessment (due this month), Vermont Climate Council objectives (statutory report pending) and recent/anticipated action by Congress and the Biden Administration.

RECOMMENDATION: stay alert to federal financing opportunities. Note that some federal disbursements already received by Norwich may be used for climate related purposes. High priority skill/ability for new town manager. 200 words

Sources of fossil fuel use. This was a major part of committee task in search of “granularity”

It is clear that there are two main kinds of reduction: building heat, and vehicle and equipment engines.

RECOMMENDATION Any steep reductions must involve both categories.

Baseline FF GHGe (note that GHGe is the objective, but direct consumption of fossil fuel itself is the narrow mandate of ART36. It was written this way to avoid complicating calculations of life cycle analysis, carbon credits and the like. Phasing out fossil fuel use is possible, it is effective, it is necessary and it is simple to understand. **Perhaps this point should be in the introduction? AML)**

Present data so far. Describe improvements such as more recent data or vehicle-by-vehicle data.

DATA RECOMMENDATIONS

<<Start of AML comment - This next section contains 3 or 4 different ways to arrange our recommendations, we should settle on one and go forward with it >>

Initial “ranking” of potential action items. Describe this process and its results. The thirteen higher ranked elements identified so far for focus (not necessarily listed in order of priority) are:

Telematics to track driver behavior and fuel use
Replace Tracy Hall HVAC - Air source heat pump
Weatherization - Tracy Hall
Review TON practices and procedures

Inventory vehicles and fuel use
Install fuel usage monitoring per vehicle (or key per vehicle)Â
Moratorium on new FF vehicles
Weatherization - DPW
Policy to require climate impact statements for all town spending
Use fleet management techniques to reduce fuel use
DPW - Air source heat pumps
Electric grounds equipment (eLawn Care)
Replace Tracy Hall HVAC - ground source heat pump

Ranking discussion, like all parts of this draft, are still underway as part of our consensus process.

PATHWAYS: A method for planning aggressive, feasible, affordable and effective reductions in fossil fuel use on a schedule that recognizes the urgency of the climate problem.

ILLUSTRATIVE PATHWAYS (Eva R.)

PATH A (Cut and paste part of Eva presentation)

PATH B (Cut and paste part of EVA presentation)

A la carte -- It is a menu, A & B are not either-or options nor are they mutually exclusive.

Options for actions to eliminate/reduce FF use. Here we will elaborate what looks promising for our specific town in these various categories of action.

- Heat pumps
- Weatherization

- Behavior changes (JC Question. If these are changes in town personnel behaviors or institutional behaviors, maybe break out separately from technology discussions?)
- Pellet boilers
- Liquid biofuels
- Battery backup (to replace generators)
- Hybrid vehicles
- EVs and charging infrastructure

Recommendations for coming year -- these are open for discussion and the two recommendations in ALL CAPITALS are illustrative. Open for suggestions in additional recommendations

LOW HANGING FRUIT -- Steps that can be taken immediately that would basically pay for themselves or have little or no upfront cost. Examples? (Member of the public cited engine-idling.)

REVISITING TRACY HALL AND OTHER MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

*technology

*schedule

*financing (including federal?)

ASSESSING THE HEAVY EQUIPMENT PHASE-OUT AND REPLACEMENT CYCLE

Both short term and long term actions may be involved. A long term capital plan for major DPW, fire, and similar heavy equipment. When are retirement dates and when are models expected that don't use internal combustion engines? When, if ever, does it make sense to use biofuels as interim measure?

<<END AML Comment>>

Conclusion -

- Future A36 committee or other group

Appendix A - GHG Inventory

Appendix B - Initial action list (2021-2022)

Appendix C - Action time line (2023-2040)

- Actions (Projects)
- Behavior/policy changes (policy and programs)

Appendix D - Fleet inventory (by department)