

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee
Tuesday, 6/27/23, 7 pm, via Zoom

Attending: Linda Gray, Garret Heaton, Charlie Lindner, Erich Rentz (chair), Brad Wible
Public: Jake Crumbine

1. The 5/23 minutes and 6/27 agenda were approved by consensus.

2. Updates

- * E-lawn equipment: Charlie summarized outreach on 6/10 at the transfer station – fewer people came over to talk; he estimates 2/3+ already have electric equipment; there were nevertheless some extended conversations with a few residents; a member of the Conservation Commission participated to talk about “de-lawning;” Matt Stuart of The Electric Lawn service attended with one of his mowers.
- * Narrative collection: Garret reported that there are no new participants; and Charlie and Garret will coordinate about working stories into future posts.
- * Local contractor availability: there was consensus to drop further work on this.
- * Norwich Historic Preservation Commission: Linda has one addition to make to the NEC web page; other actions are to be done by the NHPC; this item can be dropped from future agendas.
- * E-bike loans: the loan period is rescheduled for 9/11-20; Linda proposed a schedule with 4 two-day loans and a “demo day” on Saturday, 9/16. She will circulate the schedule, for volunteer sign-ups to NEC members and to 3 other bike volunteers.
- * Root District Schoolhouse climate series, NEC on 9/6: agreement to focus on case studies, to show how you can make a plan and figure out next steps. Candidates for case studies include Elliot Harik (Linda will ask) and Aaron Lamperti (Erich will ask). Window inserts can be mentioned, at least for 2023 Build volunteers, probably 2024 orders.
- * Future activities: agreement for Charlie to schedule outreach at the transfer station for 7/22, with a focus on EVs; the 2023 WindowDressers Community Build will be 9/28-10/4 at the Norwich Congregational Church; discussion about asking Efficiency VT about doing a ButtonUp webinar for us.

3. Spray Foam concerns: discussion about the VTDigger article on problems with spray foam installations; the Hartland Energy Committee is planning a webinar, Charlie will ask them to keep us informed; if we organize an Efficiency VT webinar for ButtonUp, ask them to address this topic.

4. Funded Idle-Free Schools Campaigns: Green Driving America requested NEC support contacting the Richmond Middle School and MCS for their initiative; consensus to respond with contact info for the schools’ principals and ask to be kept up to date.

5. IREC (Energy Coordinator) report: Linda reported on Jeff Grout’s role for Tracy Hall, following the Selectboard’s discussion on 6/21. The Interim Town Manager and the Selectboard agreed to ask Jeff Grout to summarize energy options for Tracy Hall, perhaps at their next regular meeting. The report from consultant Living Buildings is the Selectboard packet at <http://norwich.vt.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/000-SB-Packet-06-21-2023.pdf> (p 88). There are both short-term and long-term energy needs, and the Selectboard is discussing space needs as well. There was some Selectboard discussion of wood pellet heating; NEC consensus that burning wood did not reduce GHG emissions.

Linda also reported on joint work among the IREC towns on improving compliance with Residential Building Energy Standards (RBES). A subgroup is pursuing some legislative approaches; S. 100 set up a summer study committee and Rep. Holcombe has put forward Matt Christie of Strafford as a member.

6. UVTMA: Rob not present, no report.

7. Other business:

- Rec. Dept. director Brie Swenson contacted the NEC to ask for advice on solar power for a Huntley fields water fountain; we are awaiting more details. There was appreciation for her seeking technical guidance from NEC.

- IREC Jeff Grout has organized a tour of a solar canopy at Lawson's Finest Liquids in Waitsfield on 6/28; relevant for Norwich because a solar canopy at the Huntley parking lot is one of the few options for solar on Town-owned land.

8. Public comment and correspondence: Jake Crumbine introduced himself as a Norwich native who's been in California for several years, moving back to Norwich this summer, and interested in getting involved.

8. Adjourned at 8:25.

The fourth Tuesday in June is 7/25.

submitted by Linda Gray