

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee
Tuesday, 7/25/23, 7 pm, via Zoom

Attending: Linda Gray, Garret Heaton, Erich Rentz (chair)

1. Approval of the 6/27 minutes was postponed to the August meeting; no changes to the 7/25 agenda.
2. Updates
 - a. The 7/22 EV event at the transfer station was canceled, because of repaving work there. With summer schedules, there was agreement to not reschedule. A National Drive Electric Week event will be held on 9/30 in Lebanon, in the lower parking lot behind City Hall. NEC can publicize, but not actively help, since the date conflicts with the window inserts Community Build.
 - b. Efficiency VT is hosting on 8/9 a webinar for planning Button Up this fall. Erich, Linda, and Rob are planning to attend. From that webinar, we should know whether pursuing a Norwich-specific webinar makes sense.
 - c. E-bike loans: Linda has circulated a volunteer schedule, for the loan period 9/11-20 (4 two-day loans and a “demo day” on Saturday, 9/16). About half the volunteer needs are filled; Linda and Norm can fill in several of them and she will re-send the schedule as well. She reported that other towns are reporting diminished borrowing, some due to rainy weather. The Kilton Library in West Lebanon will permanently host and loan out 2 e-bikes; this may provide a nice model for other area libraries and the loan program could evolve in that direction.
 - d. Root District Schoolhouse climate series, NEC on 9/6: following up on last meeting’s agreement to focus on case studies, Linda contacted Elliot Harik; he is interested and willing, but with family commitments, he’s a “maybe” until closer to the date. Erich will contact Aaron Lamperti as another case study, and Eva Rosenbloom about presenting.
 - e. WindowDressers: the 2023 Community Build will be 9/28-10/4 at the Norwich Congregational Church; volunteer sign-ups are 17% filled and open at <https://signup.com/go/JLAJXbD> . About 100 more inserts can be ordered. We will not end up building inserts for COVER, as they prefer measuring and building them over the winter. Dan & Whit’s will again dedicate September “round-up” payments to Upper Valley Builds.
3. Earth Hero app <https://www.earthhero.org/app/>: consensus was to not actively promote this; it’s not particularly helpful for anyone who’s already taken basic actions, and there was no enthusiasm for another app on one’s phone.
4. Lead in telecomm cables: a resident emailed NEC about [concerns](#) of lead contamination in aging telecomm cables. There was consensus that this is relevant to higher levels of government than the Town, and to direct the resident to contact the Public Utility Commission and/or the Public Service Dept., which oversee telecommunications in Vermont.
5. IREC (Energy Coordinator) report: Linda reported on Jeff Grout’s summary at the 7/12 Selectboard meeting on the energy reports for Tracy Hall (2020 proposal from EEI, and 2023 review by Living Buildings). The Selectboard asked the Interim Town Manager to issue an RFP for a professional to provide guidance on both space needs and energy improvements. The [RFP](#) for a “Tracy Hall Improvement Study” is out, with a response date of 8/24. Linda hopes that Jeff will be involved in reviewing the responses.
6. UVTMA: Rob not present, no report.

7. Other business:

- Linda reported that VTrans will hold virtual public meetings on 8/2, on their Draft Carbon Reduction Strategy, as part of a process to qualify for \$7 million in federal funds. The push from the Sierra Club VT is to ask VTrans to implement a cap and invest program to limit emissions and invest in public transportation and infrastructure for people who walk and bike. Details on their top transportation priorities [here](#). Details on the Vtrans meetings [here](#)

8. Public comment and correspondence: none

Adjourned at 7:55. The fourth Tuesday in August is 8/22.

submitted by Linda Gray