

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee Tuesday, 2/24/21, 4 pm, via Zoom

Attending: Linda Gray, Susan Hardy (until 5:00), Aaron Lamperti, Suzanne Leiter, Norm Levy, Charlie Lindner, Erich Rentz

Guest: Linda Cook

Linda Gray gave the statement of Act 92 compliance. The 1/26 meeting minutes and the 2/24 agenda were approved by consensus.

By consensus the committee designated Aaron Lamperti as its participant in the new group that the Selectboard approved (2/10/21) to make recommendations on eliminating fossil fuels from Town operations (Article 36, Town Meeting 2019). The group will also include a Selectboard member, a Planning Commission member, and two members of the public.

Norm Levy reported on the Energy Saving Project with Vital Communities (outreach on energy improvements to mobile home owners): two Norwich residents responded, one simply to report on work done with COVER, and the other has been unreachable through three attempts.

Linda reported on plans for the 2021 E-bike loan program: Norwich will have the bikes 6/13 through 7/4; the Sharon Energy Committee will take them for the following two weeks. There was consensus to schedule a mix of 30- and 60-minute test rides on Sun-Mon-Tue-Wed, aiming for a total of 6-8; and take-home loans for Thu-Sat. Linda will develop a draft schedule.

Linda reported that all four farms from the 2020 Eat Low & Local campaign have confirmed their interest in participating again. She will update the web page, and do a sequence of list serv posts from 3/8 through 4/30.

Charlie Lindner, Aaron, and Linda shared their observations of the Hartford climate action planning process: the consultant's reports (on pathways/strategies, vulnerability, greenhouse gas inventory, and renewable energy potentials) are good; per Hartford Selectboard minutes, the consultant contract is for \$30,000; the small-group discussions are less focused. Discussion ideas: train residents to facilitate small groups; ask the regional planning commission to prepare climate reports for all their towns.

Susan Hardy reported on the UV Transportation Management Association meetings: VT legislation has been introduced before the Governor's transportation budget, to get climate-focused proposals into the discussion early. [links to a 2/22 VECAN [webinar](#) on the same topic and the presentation [slides](#)]. Lebanon planning staff are drafting regulations to encourage/require developers to provide covered bike parking, perhaps linked to reduced car parking requirements. Discussion of the Beaver Meadow sidewalk project; agreement to encourage support for cyclists as well as walkers.

2021 "Electrify Everything" planning:

- Erich Rentz reported on his contact with Steve Wisbaum of Charlotte, who's actively engaging energy committees on electric lawn equipment. There was agreement to schedule Steve for a virtual event in May, targeted to residential users. Erich will follow up. Linda will follow up on the question of whether the Conservation Commission has information to share on reducing lawns.
- Agreement to aim for a presentation on heat pumps in April; Linda will follow up with Efficiency VT.
- Linda has updated the NEC web page necVT.org for Electrify Everything and asked members to review and give feedback.

- Linda emailed a Sustainable Hanover contact who organized their roster of area EV drivers, to learn if Norwich residents are on it, what info they collected from participants, and how they are linking those with questions to those with experience. NEC can apply their model to developing rosters of “guides” for EVs, e-bikes, heat pumps, weatherization. For some topics, in-state experience is relevant, as is accurate knowledge of rebates and contractors.
- Norm is following up with the Burlington Elec. Dept. and their preferred EV dealers network, on the concept of having an online listing of EVs available for purchase in VT.
- Aaron was contacted by GMP about their workplace charging program; Linda has asked Dave Roberts, Drive Electric VT, for comment before committing the committee to promoting it to local businesses.
- Aaron is in touch with another local homeowner about a weatherize/electricify case study.

Public comment/correspondence:

- Norman Miller emailed about his interest in matching the development of the old McLain house with the newly proposed Civilian Climate Corps.
- EVT emailed with a statewide summary on ButtonUp 2020; they aren’t giving out data by town, but emailed that “many residents” in Norwich signed up for virtual home energy visits.
- Linda Cook requested that, if possible, links to items discussed at this meeting be included in the minutes. For the Hartford climate reports, Linda Gray will put her in touch with the Hartford committee chair.

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, March 23, 7 pm, via Zoom.

submitted by Linda Gray