

Norwich Energy Committee Meeting Agenda 8/25/2026

The next meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee is Tuesday, 8/25/2026, at 7 pm, via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84917757672>

Meeting ID 849 1775 7672 US Toll-free 833 548 0276 US Toll-free.

Contact in case of access issues: Linda Gray (802-649-2032), linda.c.gray@gmail.com

Agenda:

1. Review and approve 7/28/26 meeting minutes
(<https://norwich.vt.us/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/NEC-7-28-26-minutes.pdf>) and this agenda.
2. Future Events/Outreach: invitation to cosponsor a Sustainable Hanover workshop on EVs... “a 9/29 virtual workshop, probably around an hour to an hour and half starting at 6 pm.” With Dave Roberts from Drive Electric VT and someone from NH
3. Energy Plan Working Group
4. Tracy Hall Energy Upgrades
5. Shared Energy Coordinator Report
6. Committee Organization – open positions
7. Other Business
8. Public comments, correspondence, and announcements
9. Adjourn

ENERGY

Objectives

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Norwich municipal operations, businesses and residents (24 VSA §4302 (c) (7)).
- Reduce overall energy use in Norwich (24 VSA §4302 (c) (7)).
- Shift energy use in Norwich from non-renewable to renewable sources (24 VSA §4302 (c) (7) (A)).
- Increase the amount of renewable energy being produced in Norwich in a manner that is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of this plan (24 VSA §4302(c) (7) (A)).
- Pursue strategies identifies in the State Energy Plan (30 VSA §§202, 202b).
- Increase the number of trips aboard Advance Transit by Norwich residents (24 VSA §4302(c) (4) (A)).
- Construct a sidewalk or multiuse path between Norwich Village and the Hartford town line along US-5 (24 VSA §4302(c) (4) (A)).
- Weatherize Tracy Hall and install heat pumps for thermal heating (24 VSA §4302(c) (7) (A)).

Policies

- Ensure that the review of the Norwich Zoning and Subdivision Regulations is informed by the link between changing land use patterns and reducing fossil fuel use.
- Consider lifecycle costs when planning to construct or upgrade municipal facilities.
- Require large-scale commercial and institutional development to install solar panels on roofs and over any parking lots where feasible.
- Support the development of new renewable energy generation facilities on the state's list of preferred sites:
 - New or existing structures,
 - Parking lot canopies,
 - Previously developed parcels,
 - Brownfield sites,
 - Former sanitary landfills,
 - Disturbed portions of gravel pits/quarries/mineral extraction sites,
 - Superfund sites or those listed on the National Priorities List.
- Development of new renewable energy generation facilities must be carefully sited and

conditioned to minimize any undue adverse effect upon Norwich's:

- Historic districts, landmarks, sites and structures listed on state or national registers;
 - Public parks and recreation areas, including trail networks;
 - Designated scenic roads (TH-35, TH-52, TH-53);
 - Special flood hazard areas identified by National Flood Insurance Program maps (except as required for hydropower facilities);
 - River corridors (except as required for hydropower facilities) as designated by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources;
 - Highest priority interior forest blocks or habitat connectivity blocks as designated by the municipality or by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources;
 - Public and private drinking water supplies, including mapped source protection areas;
 - Primary agricultural soils mapped by the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service with the exception of agrivoltaics;
 - Necessary wildlife habitat identified by the state or through site analysis, including core habitat areas, migration and travel corridors;
 - Significant natural communities identified by the identified by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources or through site analysis;
 - Rare, threatened, or endangered species habitat or communities identified by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources or through site analysis;
 - Vernal pools identified by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources or through site analysis.
- The following areas within Norwich are unsuitable for the development of new energy generation facilities and are prohibited:
 - Floodways identified by National Flood Insurance Program maps (except as required for hydropower facilities);
 - Wetlands as indicated on Vermont State Wetlands Inventory maps or identified through site analysis.
 - Without interfering with the project's function, use screening to reduce the visual impacts of energy generation, transmission, and distribution projects as seen from public roads and neighboring properties. This policy shall not apply to solar arrays installed on rooftops or ground-mounted solar arrays with a capacity of 15 kW or less.
 - All new energy generation projects must limit site clearing to the minimum necessary extent.

- Biomass energy generation or thermal energy generation facilities must utilize appropriate air pollution control measures.
- Biomass energy generation or thermal energy generation facilities are prohibited from being sited within any census block group that meets the state's definition of having an environmental justice focus population under 3 V.S.A. § 6002(4).
- A minimum distance from the base of any proposed wind turbine to any property line or town or state highway right-of-way should be, at a minimum, 150% the height of the wind turbine.
- Develop small hydroelectric facilities in Norwich only if the project meets the other policies of this plan and avoids or, if no other reasonable alternative exists, minimizes and mitigates undue adverse impacts to riverine ecosystems and water quality.
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Actions

- Establish a mechanism to collect and appropriate funds to support projects that further the objectives of this Energy Plan.
- Promote bike and pedestrian as non-vehicular transport modes using best practices for traffic engineering such as sidewalks, bike lanes and dedicated trails.
- Support Advanced Transit in providing a range of commuter services to Norwich, providing connections with locations where residents attend school, work and shop.
- Develop new programs, or support existing programs from available Efficiency Vermont, SEVCA, and other organizations, that assist low-income households with weatherizing and improving the efficiency of existing dwelling units.
- Support the work of Green Mountain Power to create a more resilient and hardened electric infrastructure.
- Advocate before VTrans on behalf of non-vehicular road users for improved accommodations on state highways.
- Review hybrid and electric options for any municipal vehicle purchase or replacement.
- Consider how to address barriers to development related to limitations on wastewater capacity, including a review of the findings of the 2005 study conducted by the Norwich Sewer Committee in light of current challenges and changes in wastewater management.
- Encourage development projects to install solar collectors on rooftops and parking lots.
- Participate in the Section 248 process before the Public Utility Commission to make decisions that further the goals, objectives, and policies of this plan.
- Implement to the best of our abilities the (non-binding) Article 36 from the Town of

Norwich 2019 ballot, which was passed by voters:

Shall the voters of Norwich direct 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 percent per year starting in the 2019-20 fiscal year and continuing until they are eliminated entirely, and shall the Town Manager be charged with monitoring such efforts and reporting on them each year in the annual Town Report, and no capital expenditures shall be made that contradict or undermine this direction, absent a majority vote of the Selectboard?

- Ensure that the Zoning Administrator or their designee has the training and resources to both enforce state Residential Building Energy Standards and issue Certificates of Compliance on development projects greater than 800-sf.
- Provide residents with information on:
 - cold-climate heat pumps, and other non-fossil fuel heat sources in new construction and in existing homes and buildings;
 - replacing fossil fuels powered vehicles with electric vehicles;
 - managing forest land for long-term, sustainable harvesting of wood.
- Raise climate crisis and energy awareness.
- Work with community groups and others to support non-vehicular transportation options in Norwich.
- The town should include energy efficiency and use of renewable energy when planning for capital projects and consider adopting a Capital Budget and Program that includes weatherization, fuel switching, and electric efficiency projects at Town-owned facilities.
- Promote ridesharing among Norwich residents by sharing information about Tri-Valley Transit's [Dial-A-Ride Program](#).