Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee
Tuesday, 11/24/26, 7 pm, via Zoom
Attending: Mary Albert, Rob Gere, Linda Gray, Aaron Lamperti, Brad Wible

1. The 10/27 minutes and the 11/24 agenda were approved by consensus.

2. Residential Building Energy Standards Letters of Support: Linda explained that, while Residential Energy Building Standards (RBES) are mandated in VT, there's really no enforcement and only ½ of homes comply with that code. An "action team" of the Energy Action Network is working to improve this. One issue is municipal authority in this area, which requires legislative action to clarify. The action team is circulating a letter for selectboards across the state to send to legislators:

> *Many municipalities would like to help close the administration and enforcement gap, but current law is unclear on whether they have the authority to do so. Existing statutes allow towns and cities to adopt building codes and require an energy certificate before issuing a certificate of occupancy, but they do not explicitly state that a municipality may administer or enforce RBES. Without that clarity, municipalities that want to act face legal uncertainty.*
> *...We urge you to support potential legislation clarifying municipal authority to administer and enforce RBES on a voluntary basis.*

There was consensus to endorse the letter and ask the Norwich Selectboard to approve and sign it. Aaron and Linda will follow up.

3. Future Events/Outreach: the NEC/Sustainable Hanover virtual workshop on 11/12/26 (retrofitting houses for energy efficiency and carbon reduction) went well; the recording has been posted to the NEC homepage. Some discussion of doing a short video on the topic.

Mary will publicize on the listserv about a 12/3 state webinar on Municipal Climate Planning Guides. https://climatechange.vermont.gov/event/municipal-climate-planning-guides-launch-webinar

Linda raised two possibilities for future events, for discussion at our next meeting: doing a Norwich version of the Chittenden Energy Challenge https://sites.google.com/view/chittenden-energy-challenge/home; and organizing a showing of the movie "2040", see this review https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/2040-movie-review-2020

4. Net metering changes: Linda noted that, in the Public Utility Commission rulemaking process on net-metering, workshop #2 was held 11/16. The larger utilities said they have no serious problems with current and future n-m solar, while the smaller utilities indicated they do have some constraints. Workshop #3 has just been scheduled for 12/21; solar developers will present on a variety of cost issues. The PUC has not yet gotten into any specifics on net-meter compensation; the whole process is expected to take about a year.

5. Energy Plan Working Group: Rob and Brad had no updates, the meeting that was scheduled for November was postponed.

6. Tracy Hall Energy Upgrades: Aaron had no updates; there has been no further work by the working group headed by Kimo Griggs. There was discussion about proposing attic-level weatherization at Tracy Hall (which might be funded through a reserve fund) and/or developing a 2027 warrant article to endorse electrifying Tracy Hall. There was consensus for Aaron to follow up with Harry Falconer about weatherization as a project that could be pursued regardless of space redesigns in the building; and for Aaron and Mary to draft a warrant article to present to the Selecboard.

7. Shared Energy Coordinator report: Harry Falconer is working on recommendations from the updated GHG inventory; coordinating with school staff about EV charging for employees at Marion Cross School. He and a colleague could conduct building audits for the public safety and public works buildings.

8. Committee organization: no change; Mary will follow up in a month or so with a lead.

9. Other Business: Linda noted that VECAN staff have learned of major discrepancies in price quotes for heating fuel, with examples of customers being offered, individually, large discounts when they called providers to question high prices. They plan to ask town energy contacts to help collect data via local listserv posts.

10. Public comments, correspondence and announcements: none

11. Adjourned at 8:13. The fourth Tuesday in December is 12/22.

Submitted by Linda Gray