

## North Haven Clean Energy Task Force

### Minutes

January 10, 2011

Present: Kenny Foscue, Letty McPhedran, Sarah Baird, Diantha Thorpe, Caroline Dumont, Maurice Libson

Meeting was opened at 7:10 PM.

#### Solar panels on the high school, installation and publicity.

As yet, no one has observed exterior panels on the high school. Nonetheless, discussion opened on publicity to surround the installation of the earned panels. We understand that there may be some 24 panels, to produce 4 KW of electricity. As Kenny pointed out, while CEF wants to control publicity surrounding this, we need to be responsible for alerting local media and providing CEF with a list of invitees (see October minutes), as well as mounting our own campaign. Suggestions for our publicity included

A sign on the Green (Letty has already created this);

A Spring celebration centered around the panels to show townspeople that we are moving forward in the clean energy program, possibly piggybacked onto Earth Day celebrations;

Thanking the people whose commitment to clean energy has earned these panels through an article in the paper, or possibly with email notifications;

A ribbon-cutting with town officials, meaningful because the largest segment of town budget is energy;

Making sure that HS principal Russell Dalai is involved so as many high school students as possible can be around (especially Project Green members);

Using the celebration as a fulcrum to get more people to sign up for clean energy.

It was decided we need to contact the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (CEF) to see what their plans are, and when, before we can cement any of our ideas. Kenny will contact Jillian Carbone and Bob Wall about this. Overall, Sarah felt we need to find a new way to frame the benefits of signing up for clean energy.

#### Approaching the business community

Diantha has been in touch with Robin Wilson of the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce, proposing that we facilitate a talk or meeting for the Chamber to explain

clean energy and energy conservation to businesses. Robin will bring this up to their legislative committee in mid-January. Diantha will follow up.

Sarah suggested we inaugurate a system for giving out Clean Energy awards, or badges, to businesses in the community that sign up for the Clean Energy option.

Caroline suggested we profile the Tennis and Raquet Club as a business committed to solar energy. Maurice said he had approached them previously to see what cost savings they have realized from their solar panels, and received no answer. They did get a 45% discount on their system from CEF.

It was asked how many points we could get for signing up a big business, as opposed to a small one. According to Letty's correspondence with Roger Smith, each 100MWh of clean energy purchased by a local commercial and industrial customer through the CT Clean Energy Options program counts as 10 points toward solar panels for the town. There is a stepped program as well for Green-e certified REC purchase by larger companies; this is explained in detail on the CCEF website. The effect is, the more clean energy they use, the more points we get.

Letty has called Mark Garrett of Community Energy to find out what businesses are already signed up. He cannot say, but by the end of January will send us a check for \$10 each to cover the sign-ups from Election Day 2010.

#### Connecticut Clean Energy Fund Communities Program: Proposed Changes

These were:

- 1) Town government to increase its clean energy commitment to 25% of electricity usage at municipal facilities by the year 2012;
- 2) Town government agrees to complete an annual electronic survey documenting their progress in reducing energy use in municipal buildings under the EPA's Community Energy Challenge;
- 3) Alternative rewards: rather than solely offering solar systems, as it now does for a minimum 2kw installation, based on the number of clean energy sign-ups, the CCEF would consider offering such things as a solar vehicle recharging station, solar lighting, and solar trash compactors as lesser awards.

There was confusion about what the three steps proposed meant in practice and whether they could be seen as a re-writing of the rules. Kenny will ask Hugh to have Step 1 redefined. After much discussion, Sarah pointed out that the changes were a hopeful way to increase the program and that we did not have to rule on, or adopt them, but to see them only as what they are—proposals. The discussion did reveal basic ignorance on our part of where the town of North Haven stands on using clean energy; and whether the town is fulfilling its obligation to use 20% clean energy by 2010 and will do so in the future; whether the town administration has met this goal through using green certificates.

### EPA Challenge

In order to be part of the Clean Energy Option, the town must join the EPA Challenge. Letty has been instrumental in trying to obtain information about town energy use. Selectman Freda has finally obtained the costs of energy in town buildings over a 3-year period so a baseline of use can be found for each.

Letty was told that town officials cannot do the necessary work of benchmarking, so she will find the top twelve municipal buildings in terms of energy use, and will pass this information along to Linda Darveau of EPA in Boston. Linda will do the work for us, so that we will know how much energy is used in each building, and Linda will call Freda to explain to him how the benchmarks can be used for the financial benefit of the town.

Letty will also contact Ed Gomeau, business official for the Board of Education, to get the same figures for school buildings, for the same purposes.

### Other Business

Maurice brought up the topic of electric car-charging, and noted that Alaska has set up stations for this purpose. Letty says that the CT DOT has already begun to look at commuter parking lots as possible places for this.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40.