

North Haven Clean Energy Task Force Minutes

December 12, 2011

Present: Hugh Davis, Sarah Baird, Maurice Libson, Letty McPhedran, Nick Gill, Diantha Thorpe, Kenny Foscue, Caroline Dumont

The meeting was opened at 7:05 PM.

The next meeting will be January 9, 2012.

Treasury report: The treasury holds about \$2,000. Community Energy remitted \$700 in July for sign-ups; a \$560 is to be paid to Project Green for fall sign-ups and grant money.

General discussion on Town Energy Plan and proposed new firehouse

We need to 1) Offer Planning and Zoning and the Building Committee input on solar panels, some types of which cannot be placed on metal roofs; 2) Make a statement re: this at Board of Selectmen's meeting on January 5. Letty volunteers to do this, and Hugh and Sarah agree to go; 3) Write town an official letter; 4) Find out if proposed new firehouse will be "green," and if it will be able to hold panels. Maurice will call AIA to see what directives are.

Can we deal directly with the Superintendent of Schools re: green matters? Can we give him a choice of dates to meet? Possible matters for agenda could be recycling bins, perhaps solar recycling compacting machines?

Regional Workshop of December 3, 2011 issues and outcomes

Synopsis of this meeting received from Justin Haaheim of Clean Water Action is the same as our success and challenge list. Discussion centers on what our priorities are, immediate and long range goals, defining ourselves better, telling a coherent story of ourselves and our mission.

Scope of our mission/activities has changed from clean energy alone to efficiency, energy audits, etc. Sarah offers to come up with a rough draft of a mission statement and plan but agrees to postpone it. Kenny emphasized the importance of a meeting between Marty Mador of Hamden and Mike Okrent of Bethany, and the Deputy Commissioner of the DEEP.

Here are challenges:

Recruiting problems: How to persuade more people to join the Task Force? 1) Tell ten people and hope one will join; 2) Build up sub-group of helpers (we do);

Points for solar panels

Problem: We seldom know where we stand re: points for panels. We get points for energy savings as well as clean energy sign ups. How do we get them? Need to find out from Bob Wall. Do we get points from Covidien's energy savings? Hugh will call Sheri Borelli at UI to ask.

Visibility:

Name change: Should we change our name to reflect a broader definition of our group? Most members agree. Spontaneous ideas are North Haven Clean Energy and Efficiency Task Force; North Haven Clean and Green; North Haven Energy Task Force.

Recycling activities: Can we get recycling on sports fields for bottles? Is DPW in charge of this? Could we get solar compactors put on fields? Caroline is willing to work with Project Green kids on this and will contact Lynn Sadowsky of DPW.

Other: Sponsor events? Essay contest for grammar school children?

Publicity

1) Hugh will ask Anthony if a Project Green student can write a newspaper article on their activities; 2) Sarah suggests a regular feature of one student, pictured with the phrase "I recycle (because).....";

Town Hall

The Municipal Clean Energy Pledge mandates 30% clean energy for the town by 2015. North Haven pledged, and met, 20% by 2010.

Questions:

Can the town hire an energy manager, perhaps along with other towns? Guilford received a \$280,000 grant for this purpose and shares the manager with Durham, Killingworth, Branford, and Madison. Hugh will ask Mr. Freda if the town can look for such a grant, to share with others such as West Haven, Hamden, and Cheshire. Kenny suggested SCRCOG.

New LED lights were installed in the pool in July. How can the savings be tracked?

See Letty's comments re: green buildings above.

Residential

How can we get more town groups to help us with sign ups? Nick: Boy Scouts? Letty: Girl Scouts? Sarah: Would PTAs work with auditing companies (Home Solutions) in some fund raising capacities? Kenny: Speak with high school principal Russ Dallai re: students working on clean energy activities for community service?

Businesses

Most towns have had little success promoting energy issues to businesses. Kenny thinks the task force should have a liaison to businesses. Hugh thinks the First Selectman needs to be the prime mover. Sarah suggested the town would get more points if more businesses participated (“Bright Ideas grant”).

DEP Stakeholders’ meeting, Clean Energy Communities Program, Hartford, December 13

The first selectman is not going to send anyone to this meeting so Nick Gill volunteered and will address these issues re: 2012 changes to the Clean Energy Communities program:

How do we get information about the points we have earned, and the sign ups we have?

How can we fund an energy manager? How effective are they? Can they train town personnel?

Is there low cost financing for municipalities?

What does 30% clean energy by 2015 mean when we have 20% already?

What are more effective ways to reach businesses?

What about small businesses?

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diantha Thorpe

