

BENNINGTON ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, January 5th, 2022

Bennington Fire Dept Multi-Purpose Rm, 3rd Floor, 130 River St, Bennington

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

In attendance: William Karis, Deana Oaks, Richard Dundas, Bruce Lee Clark, Al Bashevkin, Marsh Hudson-Knapp, Bruce Lierman, Michael Kuser, Bill Christian, Callie Fishburn,

Meeting Called to order at 7:01 PM

- Review minutes from Dec 1st meeting
 - Richard Dundas submitted the following correction to minutes from December. The State required Residential Building Energy Standards (and Commercial Building Energy Standards) are a State mandate in every plan review letter. The Director of facilities completes building permits where the Energy standards apply and they include the following statements (depending if a Residential or Commercial Project where Energy Standards are applicable):
 - The new building shall comply with the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards (RBES). For further information you may contact the assistance center at 1-855-887-0673 or visit the web site at https://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy_efficiency/rbes
 - The RBES certificate and a RBES affidavit must be completed and sent to the Department of Public Service prior to occupancy. Further certification must be permanently affixed to the outside of any new heating and cooling equipment, to the electrical service panel located inside the building, or in a visible location in the vicinity of these locations.
 - The project shall comply with the Vermont Commercial Building Energy Standards (CBES). You may contact the assistance center at 1-855-887-0673 or visit the web site at https://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy_efficiency/cbes for further assistance.
 - The CBES certificate and a CBES affidavit must be completed and sent to the Department of Public Service prior to occupancy. Further certification must be permanently affixed to the outside of any new heating and cooling equipment, to the electrical service panel located inside the building, or in a visible location in the vicinity of these locations.
- EV charging and EV car-share opportunities and next steps
 - Bruce L shared the following information for Bennington EV Charging Stations and would like more data on these charging stations. We currently have the raw number of charges / month...average session charging time (2.5 hours) and session idle (48 minutes)..to date we do not have data about breakout/charging station. Bill Karis has specific meter data

through his work with Efficiency VT...Question is how much the quick charging station is being used. This data would be helpful as it might encourage grocery chains to put chargers in their parking lots, and would help us all get a better sense of how well the charging stations are helping EV motorists.

- BK will connect with Mark Sawyer regarding other EV meters including an Interest in how much fast charger is being used
- Bruce L still has no contact with multi-housing unit
 - Madison Kramer shared that a Burlington housing complex does offers EV car-share
 - Pine Hurst in NH did not offer car sharing it because it is on the public transport route.
 - The Developer may offer car **sharing** in second unit that is not yet built and not on any route.
- Recommendations of the Energy Section of the Town Plan
 - Document Progress to Report Out at Select Board Meeting
 - VT Energy Atlas – there is a ton of data collection to do for building a baseline of local energy use
 - Creating the baseline would be the duty of a town energy coordinator
 - Drive electric VT is a great resource for data
 - Jonah is writing a series on efficiency savings within the Town of Bennington and that will assist in better understanding our progress towards a town-wide energy plan. Bill will work with Jonah to help with that series.
 - As an accomplishment, Bruce Lee-Clark connected with Jen Hoffman about energy efficiency information to distribute to new purchasers. There is some confusion about whether realtors would be willing to distribute information about energy savings, and beyond Jen Hoffman, who might be currently distributing that information. Currently, passing info from Efficiency VT to help educate new buyers might be a good idea.
 - The VT Energy Atlas on January 5, 2022 shows 142 roof-mounted PV sites in Bennington, with 60 in North Bennington, 55 in the town, 15 west of town toward the NY border, and 12 sites to the southeast, in the Niles Rd. area.
 - We can prepare fairly accurate energy benchmark data for the Town over the following two months, for example, asking the Vermont DMV for data on EV registrations in Bennington, and Green Mountain Power for an estimate of the number of Tesla Powerwalls installed to date.
 - We have not done as good a job with outreach to lower income residents of the region, and as an example, getting enough people to accept new windows through Window Dressers for their homes
 - Could dig better in data for energy consumption in town. There is not much data that could be found on fuel oil usage in the region. This information is in the VT Energy Dashboard Energy Atlas
- Continue to create matrix of action items(3,4,5,6,7 remain). This was tabled for the meeting.
- Town Energy Coordinator – pitch to Select Board and position description
 - Dick Dundas will introduce this topic to the Select Board during a February meeting. Energy Coordinator can deal with the town Population as well as the Town Government. Energy research goes back to 2003. Not enough volunteers, not enough people to do

what needs to be done to save \$ for the town. This committee can oversee the work of the energy coordinator. Data is available for evaluating energy usage, but we lack the people to do the work.

- Bill Christian will dig into the value of an energy coordinator position and what it might do for the select board.
- Bill Karis can then offer details of what we have done and what needs to be done. He has bullet points that offer information about what the position of Energy Coordinator might do.
- We will strive to have all the materials about our presentation to the Select Board in good form by our February 2 meeting, and this will be a good chunk of the Energy Committee Meeting on that date. We should continue to stress that Energy Committee should support the population of the town as well as town govt
- Public comment
 - Bruce Lierman talked of the tabling of local renewable energy generation
 - Could drastically limit amount of siting available for solar
 - Is local renewable part of the strategy to reach VT's goals, or are they just leaning on hydro Quebec.
 - Jim Sullivan shared comments with the State
 - There should be a concerted effort from a lot of communities to be heard at state level to encourage local renewable strategies
 - It seems like the only path left to encourage local renewable energy through legislature.
- Confirm agenda for first Wednesday of month, Feb2nd, 2022 meeting