

**Town of Middlebury  
Energy Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 9, 2016**

Present: R.J. Adler, Laura Asermily, Jono Chapin, Ross Conrad, Jason Kaye, Diane Munroe, Jeremy Rathbun, Howard Widelitz. Absent: Chris Robbins

Jason convened the meeting at 8:15am.

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from the committee's February 10, 2016 meeting was moved by Laura and seconded by Ross. The motion passed with 7 in favor, 1 abstention, and 1 absent.

2016 Game Plan

The discussion began with a brief visioning exercise to gather members' priorities for 2016.

- Laura: Follow up on transportation survey results, analyze results and take next steps.
- Diane: Look at Vermont's 2016 Comprehensive Energy Plan, and direct our work from there. Also, promote the Community Energy Dashboard when it is launched.
- Howard: Come up with a five year vision and where we want to take things. Also, stay focused on specific initiatives by pulling out a few that we can usher along.
- R.J.: Sustainability Expo; rooftop solar.
- Jono: Do what has been successful in the past, like educating folks on weatherization. Also, focus on volunteering and publicity/awareness.
- Jeremy: Focus on getting some local renewable energy generation projects.
- Ross: Update the Energy Section of the Town Plan.
- Jason: More outreach and project implementation

To bring this visioning closer to reality, we discussed squaring what we want to do with what we have the capacity to do. We highlighted the importance of doing work in between our monthly meetings, and that deadlines and timelines are important to hold us accountable.

We evaluated our current structure, which consists of various "project teams" and roles. We liked the structure of "teams" as it delegates the work, though we suggested ways to improve the functionality of these teams. We made the following changes with an aim of more efficient productivity:

- Hydro Team: Since there appears to be little activity on the Middlebury Falls project, this "team" will simply evolve into Jeremy providing a brief, monthly status update to the committee of his ongoing conversation with project manager Dave Hallam.
- Solar Team: This team consists of Howard, Jeremy, Jono and RJ. There will likely be quite a lot of activity coming from this team. The Solar Team will meet prior to the committee's April meeting with a goal of establishing their team's functions, priorities and schedule.
- Transportation Team: This team consists of Chris and Laura. This will also be a busy team, focused in part on the Transportation Survey and the downtown Bridge Replacements project. The Transportation Team's next step is identical to that of the Solar Team: to meet prior to the committee's April meeting and establish their team's functions, priorities and schedule.
- Budget / Treasurer / Grants Team: These entities will be rolled into one Budget Team. The team consists of Jeremy, Diane, RJ and Jason. The team will also meet prior to the committee's April meeting.
- Dashboard: Diane is taking care of the Dashboard project for the moment, as it is in beta testing. Once the Dashboard is ready for launch, this project will likely require more committee time.
- Web: The web team consists of Howard and Jason. They will discuss coming up with an online method for committee members to work outside of monthly meetings. They will check

on Vermont's Open Meeting Law requirements to see what is possible and what is prohibited.

We noted that outreach (including publicity and raising awareness) could be a part of all of our efforts in 2016.

As part of this discussion, R.J. brought up his concern of a potential conflict of interest regarding him being on the Solar Team while also being employed by SunCommon, a solar power developer. Committee members suggested that they were not uncomfortable having him on the Solar Team and appreciated him being proactive regarding this potential.

### Process for Reviewing the Energy Section of the Town Plan

Using the framework suggested by Town Planner Jennifer Murray at the committee's February 10, 2016 meeting, the committee generated the following process and schedule:

- Step 1: Broad, visioning discussion regarding the Town of Middlebury and energy. We will conduct this discussion without reference the existing Town Plan, so as to provide us with a blank canvas. One hour at April's committee meeting.
- Step 2: Compare the results of Step 1 with the existing Town Plan. Identify areas to keep, modify, add and delete. One hour at May's committee meeting.
- Step 2.5: A small team will be created to do word-smithing on the Town Plan language and specific instructions. This will occur between May's meeting and June's meeting.
- Step 3: The full committee will review the language suggestions resulting from Step 2.5. Tentatively one hour at June's committee meeting.

### Suggestion for possible Energy Committee funding

Jason brought to the committee a suggestion by Nick Artim that the Energy Committee consider the possibility of using the potential property tax revenue from Vermont Gas Systems's pipeline expansion into Middlebury to fund specific Energy Committee projects. Our discussion exhibited that while there is certainly a need for funding, there are philosophical differences among committee members in regard to using funds derived from the pipeline expansion project. The committee is quite interested in this suggestion and will be having more discussions on this matter.

Also, the committee brainstormed other possible funding sources, including payments received from solar leases of Town property, and earmarking a portion of Town energy savings for committee projects. In addition, a suggestion was to inquire with the Selectboard regarding their comfort with bonding and payback periods.

### General Updates

Middlebury's Safe Routes to School team is preparing for their April 30th "Bike & Outdoor Gear Swap & Sale" at Cannon Park from 9am - noon. Also, the "Electric Car & Bike" demo event will occur simultaneously at the Mill Street parking lot.

The 2016 Sustainability Expo is looking for sponsors. Contact R.J. Adler at [radler@suncommon.com](mailto:radler@suncommon.com) to support this year's Expo.

### Meeting Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47am. Next meeting: Wednesday, April 13, 8:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
R.J. Adler and Jason Kaye

