

**2015 Dummerston Energy Committee Retreat
January 18, 2015 3 – 6 pm**

Meeting convened at the Wilson's home at 3:05 pm
Attending: Smokay, Larry, Will, Jerelyn, Alex

1. Approved minutes from 12/1/14 meeting

Alex moved, Will seconded. Approved unanimously.

Jerelyn to send them to Laurie at the Town and Bob Sherwood for posting

2. Reviewed mission statement and Energy goal in Town Plan

DEC mission statement: The committee supports the town in monitoring locally important energy issues and developments, and promoting energy conservation, efficiency, and increased use of renewable resources. Using education, projects, and advocacy, the DEC will help Dummerston and its residents reduce their reliance on polluting forms of energy and achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Energy goal in Town Plan: To reduce total per-capita non-renewable energy consumption 40% by 2030 from a 2010 baseline

3. Collecting 2010 baseline data for assessing progress toward energy goal in Town plan

We have municipal energy consumption data from 2005 – 2011 along with that of certain other buildings (Grange, West Dummerston Vol. Fire Dept., Historical Society)

Electric data from Green Mountain Power is easy to obtain;

Data shows average consumption by residential customers is 7,036 kWh (2010)

That level of consumption satisfied by a 6 kW solar array – relevant to Solarize

Discussion of how to know where we are toward the 40% reduction goal—and do we have a real baseline at this point?

Actions for 2015:

1. Focus on the school and municipality. Fill in the municipal energy consumption spreadsheet (STOCC – Smokey will email link), convert all those numbers to MMBtu (million Btus)
2. Compile the Town-wide electricity consumption—municipal, residential, commercial; plot on a spreadsheet that we can add to every year or every five years.
3. Figure out the process for determining the baseline and periodically assessing progress for fuel oil and propane. Reach out to fuel providers to see if that data can be collected.

4. Consider advocating for the collection of energy consumption data on a statewide basis through legislation.

Massachusetts energy planning document (see pages 3-8)

Will participated in a webinar, the slides of which he attached to an email. He asked the group from MA how they established an energy baseline—thinking they might have some experience with surveys. The document they linked him to is attached also: MA took a systematic look at documenting energy use in each town as part of a state-wide initiative to reduce energy use, but they only assessed municipal energy use. We might consider a similar trial analysis for Dummerston, as Will expects in the future Vermont will move in this direction.

4. Residential energy survey – see full summary of discussion at February 2014 retreat about survey; Have a Power Point with survey data.

BACKGROUND

Initial timeline

2012 Design survey

2013 Implement survey

July – sent it out; October – began compiling data

2014 Interpret and communicate data

March – Postcards to full group of non-responders mailed

Public communication efforts

- Alex spoke about the committee’s energy survey at the Regional Energy Round Table and sent a PDF version of the survey to VNRC, which they requested to use as a sample. (2/24/14)
- Jerelyn participated in Transition Dummerston program as invited guest to speak about the survey. (2/28/14)

FROM 2014 Retreat: *What would the desirable outcomes be if we are “successful” in this initiative? How are we doing so far? Consider next steps from 2015 Views article*

- *Issue a report that would weave in results from the survey; various elements might get incorporated into the Town Plan;*
- *Identify models that are good examples of resilience*
- *A more educated population*
- *Keeping energy conservation a big part of our focus*

Alex to write a follow-up article on resilience—short version for *Views of Dummerston*; longer version to post that on the DEC website

Archive *Views of Dummerston* articles (and potentially others) on Dummerston.org – Energy Page.

Create handouts for the 2015 Town Meeting – discuss at February DEC meeting.

5. Dummerston School

Since the engineering report states that the boilers are in good operating condition, the school has decided it has time slow down its plans for installing new boiler. Sam Farwell will continue to act as liaison between Schoolboard and Energy committee. Sam and Dan Normandeau are now the School Board “energy committee”

Larry forwarded copy of report from most recent school audit; School is up for another audit during 2015. (See attached PDF to Larry’s 12/12/14 email); we’d like to know what the school has done since then to address recommendations; WSESU has a new business manager who may be more receptive to energy improvements; we should advocate for the 2015 school energy audit include more detail, including blower door testing.

Larry to contact the Vermont Superintendents Assoc asking about an updated energy audit of the school, ask if VSA does any follow-up to see if recommendations were implemented, ask if a 2015 audit can include a blower door assessment

Smokey heard about an ESCO-type organization (nonprofit) that can help a school reduce energy use. There may be a free audit component of that.

We would like to make a stronger connection with the School Board; invite Dan Normandeau to a DEC meeting. Alex to contact Sam and Dan and invite them to a meeting, and also communicate our desire to focus on the school.

Consideration of a wood pellet heating system—given the RFP that’s out to support the installation of such systems. See Alex’s email 12/3/14 with attached RFP

Smokey learned of some interesting financing options at the VECAN conference for schools and municipalities including a free energy audit. They promised to post he presentations soon.

6. Town solar energy efforts

HISTORY

- Green Lantern Capital – in March 2014 DEC rescinded letter of recommendation to SB
- Solarize Dummerston – researched the Solarize process, provided springboard for local Solarize task force; Alex presented Solarize Dummerston to the Selectboard on 4/16/14. Jerelyn and Smokey, along with Peter Thurell, presented a community solar proposal to the School Board on 6/24/14.
- Sovern community solar – considered presentation from Peter Thurell and handed off community solar effort to Solarize task force

From 7/7/14 DEC meeting: Committee members agreed that implementing solar-electric for the Town should be the primary focus of the committee’s efforts from now into 2015. The focus will be both on a distributed Solarize Dummerston initiative for solar systems that will be installed at residences and on a centralized community solar system serving

the school and town residents who don't have a suitable site for solar at their homes or who choose to participate in a central system. The committee identified some initial steps to be taken, as follows: (i) develop a Task Force, (ii) identify criteria for contractors in the Solarize Dummerston program, (iii) develop and send out an RFP to potential contractors for the Solarize Dummerston program, (iv) lay the groundwork for a marketing plan covering both programs, and (v) work with Peter Thurell on siting options for the community solar system.

School has backed out of a local community solar system, planning instead to be part of a state program; we'd like to know the status of this;

12/5/14 Peter Thurell

We have just gotten approval from Read Miller to put in a 150 kW community Solar farm at his farm. So that makes 2 sites (Arthur Wood on Stickney Brook Rd. being the first) we will have available for Dummerston folks come springtime.

TIMELINE FOR Solarize TASK FORCE – Smokey

- RFP to be completed in Spring 2015; issue it and select contractor; sign ups early summer and installations during the summer; wrap up program this year.
- Define a specific term for the offer – 10 weeks too short, 20 weeks too long; probably go with 15 weeks; 4-5 people at meetings typically: Mike Fedourke, Bruce, Daniel Hovis, Mike Pletcher; Smokey to keep rest of DEC apprised of progress

Does DEC want to be the recipient of the 10% donation?

FROM PETER: As you probably remember, part of our Community Solar program includes making a donation to a non-profit, school or town. The school and Town in Dummerston don't seem interested in our offer for their own reasons. It occurred to me that a yearly donation to the Dummerston Energy committee might make a huge difference in your ability to carry out programs (pay for publicity, etc.) in town. We could offer to make a donation to the energy committee on behalf of participants in a solarize program in Dummerston. The energy committee could use the funds to facilitate whatever programs you all feel would help the town meet its clean energy objectives. That way participants would not only get to go solar, but they would help out the town's energy policy at the same time.

Yes we should offer to be the recipient; **Jerelyn** to communicate that to Peter and then check on how that would work relative to the Town

7. Committee membership

Bill, Larry, and Jerelyn come up for reappointment in 2015

Larry to continue on committee; unclear whether Bill wants to be re-appointed.

Jerelyn just encouraged to run for Selectboard; If she did she would not continue with DEC.

Need to attract new members; maybe come up with something funny; brainstorm about that; finalize it at the February DEC meeting.

8. EVT Plug load Program – Completed

Smokey explained that timer installed at Town Garage on water coolers; 2-3 at the school. Didn't do faucet aerators. Put in smart power strips at computers; when you turn off the computer the peripherals go off. The project is completed – needed to be done by end of 2014.

9. Button Up Day

See **summary report** from Catie Berg; she gave Jerelyn the files from her organizational efforts; talked about this year's event on 11/7/15 and decided we like to combine efforts with nearby towns.

Alex will attend the 1/20/15 regional energy meeting, present idea of rotating an event among area towns; DEC doesn't want to take the lead in 2015.

10. 2015 Priorities for Energy Committee

1. School
 - a. Figure out what was done following previous energy audit
 - b. Push for new, better energy audit – Larry to look into that
 - c. Follow through with recommendations that will come out of 2015 audit
 - d. Establish tighter relations with school board
 - e. Pursue pellet system
2. Solarize Dummerston
Work with task force to support implementation of the plan
3. Dummerston energy consumption – benchmarking
 - a. Continue with benchmarking 2010 energy consumption in town
 - b. Seek data from fuel providers
 - c. Begin charting that data if we can normalize it
 - d. Further reporting of survey results
4. Fill out Energy Committee
Likely need three new members

11. Need to address funding from grant that we have not reported on

We got a \$2,000 grant funding from New England Grassroots Environmental Fund. The funder needs to be contacted about reporting. We received a Grow Grant. Jerelyn to contact Laurie about how these funds were expended.

Alex to talk with NEGEF to ask if funds can be used for other purposes (if they weren't spent on the described task).

<http://grassrootsfund.org/groups/dummerston-energy-committee>

Meeting adjourned: 5:30 pm

Terms of DEC committee members (7 members, 3-year terms)

Bill Conley	2015
Jerelyn Wilson	2015
Larry Doucette	2015
Stan Howe	2016
Alex Wilson	2016
Will Collins	2016

Sam Farwell (term ended 3/14)
Diana Lischer-Goodband (term ended 3/13)
Chris Derby (term ended 3/12)
Suzanne Weinberg (resigned 2/11)
Bob Sherwood (resigned 1/11)

Minutes approved at 6/4/15 DEC meeting. –Alex Wilson