

Durham Energy Committee

Minutes of March 2, 2009 Meeting

Attendees: Don Brautigam, Fil Glanz, Kevin Gardner, Nat Balch, Doug Clark

Absent: Vaso Partinoudi, Dave Cedarholm (DPW representative/Town Engineer), Mike Hoffman

1. Meeting minutes, as revised by Kevin, were passed.

2. Notes on the 2/18/09 meeting:

It was not filmed. There exist two audio tapes.

Nat is updating 2/18/09 meeting discussions for an article in the IWMAC newsletter.

Food resurfaced as a potential pillar. Pertinent discussions indicated that there is lukewarm support for inclusion of a food pillar, mainly because of lack of compelling data. According to the greenhouse gas inventory, food doesn't show up as a significant player. However, this could change. In the meantime, some mention of food will be made in one of the other pillars, probably Architecture/Land Use.

John Carroll's position on food is to support local food produced in small scale.

Conservation also resurfaced as a potential pillar. Support here is lukewarm support as well for inclusion of a conservation pillar, mainly because it seems to provide more clout to the other pillars to which it's connected.

Doug: Economic development could benefit greatly from energy progress.

Transportation was discussed in great detail. Expansion of Wildcat transit/COAST was discussed, as a town-to-town service. However, it doesn't seem to make great sense from an inter-neighborhood point of view.

3. Beth Potier and Brent Bell are potential volunteers, with a particular interest in bicycling.

4. Master Plan Discussion:

We should use white papers which have been developed to date to help develop our strategies.

Don asked whether we should change the Energy Chapter, based on the meeting results.

Nat responded that some tweaking makes sense, but he thought that big changes wouldn't be needed.

Nat mentioned that at this point he would like to start to actively build a volunteer network, using former ORCC members and other townspeople, rather than focusing on the Master Plan Energy Chapter. The other attendees concurred with this request.

Doug asked what other towns have been doing in regard to master plans and energy.

Don suggested that Doug refer to the Piscataqua Sustainability Initiative.

Don volunteered to do an alternative energy white paper.

Kevin volunteered to do a transportation white paper.

Mike was nominated (in absentia) to do an architectural/land use white paper.

Brent Bell attended the meeting, starting at 5:20 PM. We made mutual introductions, and Brent described his interest in bicycling efforts toward energy conservation.

5. Regarding the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund RFP:

Municipalities can apply for funding, based on carbon offset credits.

Don sensed the RFP mostly pertained to conservation.

Proposals must be submitted by March 23, 2009. Another RFP should be available late summer.

Don asked how the results of any energy conservation projects could be measured/verified.

Kevin: Can we measure in terms of carbon reductions?

Nat asked if we should apply to obtain discounts on energy audits.

Don asked if we should pursue discounts on weatherization and energy conservation projects.

Kevin suggested that perhaps we should align ourselves with the NH Carbon Challenge to accomplish this.

With regard to transportation, possible projects include a car share program, expanded wildcat transit, establishing bike trails and walking trails in town, and establishing a bike path between Durham and Newmarket.

Brent suggested that we could develop a community bike program, similar to one which exists in Biddeford.

Fil: There was a program in Durham in the 1970's to develop bike trails. There was also a program to promote safe bicycling.

Brent: In Biddeford, one or two persons fixed up bicycles, and over time changed the community culture to be more bicycle-centered.

Doug: This could be a component of the Transportation pillar.

Kevin: Rideshare has been established in Burlington, VT. Developing a bicycle path system could make a big difference in the way middle schoolers and high schoolers get to and from school

Don asked how this proposal would take place. Kevin responded that he would look into this, since he writes proposals on a regular basis.

Nat mentioned that even a modest proposal would be a good step forward.

Kevin recommended that we do transportation first, and maybe piggyback something with a NH Carbon Challenge application.

Fil: The Durham Wastewater Treatment Plant generates methane; how about using this for the greenhouse gas initiative?

Don suggested that we look into a project on weatherizing Town buildings.

Kevin said that he will meet with Todd regarding the proposal.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 PM.