



TOWN OF DURHAM

15 NEWMARKET RD

DURHAM, NH 03824-2898

DURHAM ENERGY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2010

OLD COURTHOUSE

7:00PM

— MINUTES —

Members present: Kevin Gardner, Chair; Peter Ejarque, Charles Forcey, Brian Goetz, Mike Hoffman, Robin Mower

Members absent: Dave Cedarholm

Others present: Tom Johnson, Director of Zoning, Building Codes & Health

I. The meeting was called to order at 7:10PM.

II. Approval of the agenda

Robin asked that the agenda be amended to add a discussion of topics or questions to be included in the survey for the update of the Master Plan.

III. Report from the ICC Charlotte Code Hearings— Tom Johnson, Director of Zoning, Building Codes & Health

Tom Johnson proposed at the conference that the entire state of NH be Zone 6. He noted that construction code requirements for insulation on ceilings increased significantly, from R38 to R49 values. However, unless adopted by the state, they would not be required in NH. Code officials cannot currently require R49, because the southern 4 counties are still under Zone 5 and this code will not get adopted until an unforeseeable date.

Tom pointed out that Durham has local options: We can talk to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), urge the PUC to go back to Building Code Review Board and try again. The proposed 2012 code changes will raise the values for Zone 5, so why not take a proactive stance and get it back into the code today, returning us to where we were for years. Another option is to change Chapter 38 of the Town Code (which still references 1990 BOCA, so is greatly out of date). That change could require ceiling insulation to be based on Zone 6 code. Extra insulation would help with both heating and cooling.

He noted that custom builders and guys building spec are more or less going to Energy Star ratings.

When asked about all this might affect new construction, he noted that developers will probably want to build to minimum standards, save costs. Tom noted that just because an architect is LEED-certified does not mean the construction will be built to that standard. He also pointed out that when tenants are left to be responsible for their utility bills, energy usage can be significant, as opposed to when the landlord retains control.

The committee discussed sending a letter of recommendation to the Planning Board to ask that as conditions of approval, new construction be required to provide insulation at a level of R49 or R60. (One reference is the Sprucewoods Conditions of Approval document: Sprinklers were not required by state or national code but were required by the Planning Board.)

Tom referred the Committee to the Energy Efficient Codes Coalition, which he described as a moving force across the country and has a good website.

Finally, the Committee discussed the PACE program with Tom. He asked whether one could tie conditions to the program; for example, if someone wants to put a solar panel on a poorly insulated roof, whether that insulation must be addressed first. He also asked about incentives. One idea would be to waive building permit fees, which although not significant as single fees, could add up for developers of multiple buildings (\$25 to \$100). Tom emphasized that communications with PACE participants to stress that as with all building projects, they must get building permits for plumbing, electrical, etc.

IV. Brief discussions

A. CAMBIS Bike Sharing status

Kevin and Robin brought the Committee up to date, stating that the proposal is on hold while Chadd Hippensteel develops it further, but that neither Durham nor UNH is likely to initiate the program as it stands.

B. Capstone student housing project

The Committee agreed that the earlier discussion with Tom Johnson could serve as a guide for its advisory position.

C. PACE program

Procedures and checklists have yet to be worked out. Kevin, Charles and Robin will meet with the Town Administrator.

VI. Master Plan

The Committee agreed that questions about walkability, as submitted by Kevin, would be the most appropriate to include on the Master Plan survey. Transportation is the most significant lever that the Town can use to influence energy usage.

Work on the Master Plan was postponed until a later date.

VIII. The next meeting will be November 30, 2010.

VIII. Adjournment—The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm

Minutes taker: Robin Mower