

TOWN OF DURHAM
8 Newmarket Road
Durham, NH 03824-2898
603.868.8064
www.ci.durham.nh.us

DURHAM ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 5, 2024

7:00 – 8:30 PM

Committee Member Attendees:

Matthias Dean-Carpentier --Chairperson
Ti Crossman
Emily Friedrichs
Steve Holmgren
Mike Klein
John Lannamann by video
Mike Lehrman

Guest and Other Attendees

Erin Dennehy by video

I. Agenda Discussion and Minutes Approval

It was noted that at the last meeting it had been agreed that the proposed EV ordinance should be the focus of tonight's meeting and perhaps it should be higher on the agenda. It was agreed to have Erin discuss the Energy survey then move to the ordinance.

Minutes of February 6, 2024 were reviewed and accepted.

II. Energy Committee Public Survey

Erin Dennehy reviewed the feedback she had received and summarized that suggested topics fell into 4 basic categories. They were;

- 1 Gauging opinion on upcoming initiatives.
- 2 Determining general awareness on energy issues such as heat pumps.
- 3 Gathering information on respondents EV ownership and/or home "built environment (type of heating systems etc.)
- 4 Gathering opinions on what the Energy committee should focus on in future.

Erin indicated the survey would start with gathering demographic information. She suggested the survey should take respondents not more than 10 minutes to complete and we should probably focus on not more than two topics.

Discussion followed and focused on built environment questions as well as EV issues. It was suggested EV charging and adoption barrier questions might help with the proposed EV ordinance. Erin suggested the survey could have 6-7

questions each, on two topics, plus the demographic questions. Matthias will send Erin the EV draft ordinance.

Based on the discussion Erin indicated she would be pulling together questions in the next couple of weeks and have a draft for the next meeting.

NOTE: Later in the meeting EV related questions were again discussed. The consensus was to try to pose a question around, “if you would consider an EV in next 5 years, and initial EV purchase price were not an issue, what would be the other concerns or impediments to purchasing an EV?” It was also requested if a question on public transportation needs might be included.

III. Community Power Coalition (CPCNH) Update

Steve Holmgren gave a brief update. He reported that about 30 people opted in that were not in the default migration. Regarding an Opt-Up campaign to higher percentage renewable energy it was suggested to perhaps wait until everyone had received an initial bill and was comfortable the conversion had worked. Steve said that residents should be getting their first bills in April. He also noted that it had been discussed with Todd about perhaps promoting some friendly competition between local towns on which town could get the highest percentage of Opt-Up customers. Mike K suggested maybe providing some statistics to show what impact on carbon reduction would be at different Opt Up levels.

IV. Energy Committee General Updates

Matthias reported that in regard to developing more renewable energy sources there has been some preliminary discussion about looking at a PV canopy for the Amtrak station parking lot. There is much more investigation needed.

Emily arrived and briefly updated on SB 437 that would restrict towns rights to locally change energy efficiency standards. Emily reported the bill had been amended but did not have feedback from Todd or Audrey on how helpful the amendments might be.

V. Draft EV Ordinance Discussion

As a segway to EV ordinance discussion Matthias asked about the potential for SB 437 to impact the proposed EV ordinance. Emily explained that if it were adopted as a zoning change, as has been proposed, rather than as an energy standard it should be less likely to be impacted by SB 437.

Discussion began on the section C of the draft ordinance about what would trigger implementation of the rules. There were questions about the definition of “Substantial Improvements” as currently defined in town zoning and how that applies to single family homes and could trigger applicability. Discussion then followed on section C.2 and “modification of an electric panel” as a trigger to implement the ordinance. Concerns were raised about how minor modifications

might trigger an expensive panel replacement if the existing panel could not accommodate a new 30-amp circuit for a charger.

A question and concern was expressed about any need to apply the ordinance to single family homes at all. Comment was made that a web search of barriers to EV adoption was made and there was no data or literature suggesting that potential EV buyers are deterred by home charger issues. It was also suggested that home owners often consider multiple factors when doing home modifications that influence if and when they might upgrade (replace) an electric panel. After lengthy discussion consensus was to apply the ordinance to single family (and duplex homes) only for new construction or when a Main Service Entrance panel is replaced. Clarification was made that the zoning ordinance considers duplex homes as single family.

Section C.2.e (In Mike L's revision) was discussed next. It was pointed out that business entity renovations applicability would be triggered only if a Main Service Entrance panel were replaced on a business that owns parking spaces. Also, a required site plan review could trigger applicability.

In questioning how often applicability would trigger, it was suggested that after the next iteration is reviewed the Code Officer, Audrey, could be asked to review and comment based on her historical experience.

Discussion followed about including the Durham Site Plan Regulations, article 10.1 Table of Required Parking Spaces in the EV ordinance and adding a third column indicating in each listed category of business or dwelling how the EV ordinance would or would not apply. It was a consensus that including the table would be helpful to define intent in section D.

VI. Committee Vacancies

It was noted that with Nat Balch's resignation the committee now has 2 vacancies. Matthias will follow up with Todd about seeking new volunteer members.

Motion to Adjourn was made seconded and approved at 8:45pm.