

These minutes were approved at the July 2, 2024 meeting.

DURHAM ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

June 4, 2024

7:00 – 8:30 PM

Committee Member Attendees:

Matthias Dean-Carpentier --Chairperson
Emily Friedrichs
Steve Holmgren
Mike Klein
John Lannamann
Mike Lehrman
Eric Lund

Guest and Other Attendees

Todd Selig

I. Agenda Discussion and Approval

An agenda was read aloud by Matthias, discussed, amended and accepted.

II. Prior Minutes Review/ Approval

Eric Lund asked that the Minutes of May 7 be amended relative to his comments regarding the committee selecting a vice-chair. He stated he had said it was “recommended” that the committee select a vice-chair, where the Minutes indicated, he had said selecting a co-chair was an “option”.

The minutes were accepted as amended with Em abstaining as she had not attended the meeting.

III. New Member

Matthias reported that Charles Forcey has requested appointment to the committee and was introduced from the audience.

IV. ReVision Energy Presentation

Eric St. Pierre and Bobby Obrien from ReVision Energy were introduced by Todd. They have been looking at a concept of using the Depot Road parking lot as a solar array site with a canopy mounted array over the parking area. Todd explained it is town owned land taken through a tax deed and had been a dry-cleaning plant and is now a brownfield with a capped area that is managed relative to the contaminants. The site provides some commuter parking as well as some overnight student parking. There is 3 phase power near-by.

Eric St. Pierre presented findings of a preliminary review done from satellite images with no due diligence. It is estimated the site could generate 981 kw with a canopy mounted array. It would likely take at 12-24 months just to get Eversource to greenlight a connection. Initial cost estimate is about \$5.8 million.

It would be necessary to remove some trees on one side to get exposure. The project could be eligible for a 30% IRA rebate and might have a pay back period of around 19

years. It was modeled on a direct purchase by the town rather than a power purchase agreement (PPA).

There was discussion of the possibilities of this being a community solar project where town residents could participate in purchasing shares of the project and the energy generated. It is estimated the “all-in” cost of energy might be 17 cents/kw and could be sold back to Eversource at 13 cents/kw.

There was discussion of selling RECs from the project as an option. Members discussed the expected life of the equipment.

It was noted that if the project was done on a PPA basis power would be about 25 cents/kw.

There was discussion of other possible sites in town that might be more economically favorable.

Next Steps – it was suggested to look at possibly a smaller project on this site as well as the landfill site. Also, it was suggested to look at interest in community solar options.

Todd and Matthias will discuss other options further and can review at next month’s meeting.

V. New Climate Action Fellow

Sophie Goodwin introduced herself via video link. She just graduated from UNH and will be continuing for a master’s degree. There was discussion about her role with the climate action plan and carbon inventory.

VI. EV Showcase Review

There was discussion and review of the attendance and initial feedback from a couple of the auto dealers present. It was agreed this was a good site and it seems that people lingered longer having food and beverages available. It was noted and discussed that Unitil was sponsoring an EV event in Exeter the following week and had arrangements to drive EV’s as well. It was agreed the committee might look to Unitil to co-sponsor a future event.

VII. Downtown Durham Day Event

There was discussion of what displays and information to present. Matthias and Emily indicated that they would participate and Matthias asked Todd if we can use email to arrange who else can attend. That was considered Ok. Steve Holmgren said it was still too early to promote Community Power opt-up as new rates would be coming out shortly after the event. There was discussion about having the new EV survey available at the event and offering to have attendees take the survey. Sophie confirmed the survey should be available.

VIII. EV Ordinance

Mike L. reported the latest draft has the changes made and agreed on at the last meeting. It was suggested that if the verbiage is now agreeable to everyone, we should focus on the numeric results of the formulas that generate requires EV ready and installed spaces based on the included site plan ordinance table 10.1 of required parking spaces. Jack L. put up a spreadsheet he prepared that calculates the required ready and installed spaces based on the formulas in the draft EV ordinance. Jack worked through some examples using the spreadsheet. There was discussion that the numbers of required ready and installed spaces could be quite high and that somewhat reflects the generally high parking requirements of the town.

The UNH West Edge project was mentioned as a potentially large development that could trigger large requirements. In that regard Jack questioned how mixed-use development would be treated. It was reported that the Planning Board would total parking requirements for each type of use involved. The EV ordinance would then follow those parking requirements.

After more discussion the members voted there was consensus the verbiage was agreeable and a smaller workgroup should review the numeric formulas further and report back at next meeting. Mike K, Jack L, Em and Mike L agreed to meet on this.

IX. Planning Board Issues

Em reported there were some issues the planning Board would welcome input on from the committee.

1. One question was if we were still working to update the Energy Checklist. There was discussion of how the checklist could be made more useful and if it could be more than just an optional process. The likely new state limits on towns mandating higher energy standards was discussed and would it make sense to see what evolves out of that before updating. It was noted that we could suggest incentives for higher efficiency which was not part of the state legislation. It was agreed to look at again after the EV ordinance was sent out for review.
2. The planning Board is looking at the site plan review requirements for ground mounted solar arrays. There was discussion of sizes of panels and if we want to comment.
3. There was discussion of carbon reduction goals in the Global Covenant of Mayors and what measures to use considering per capita vs. total carbon footprint. The consensus seemed to be that total carbon footprint was the most common and relevant measure. Questions were also raised about what measures go into the calculated total carbon load and if they were documented.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:24pm