

Camden Energy and Sustainability Committee

MINUTES - DRAFT

February 29, 2016

5:30pm, Washington St. Conference Room

Next Meeting – MARK YOUR CALENDARS! March 21, 2016, 5:30-6:30, Washington St. Conference Room.

Please scan for red ink priority items

Present:

Anita Brosius-Scott (Chair)
Pete Kalajian
Marina Schauffler
Ken Gross
Dana Strout
Sarah Holland
Marc Ratner
Brian Robinson

Absent:

Tom Edge
Jim Heard – Select Board Liaison
Pat Finnigan – Town Manager
Peter Galloway

Guests:

None

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm

1. **Select Secretary** – Dana Strout
2. **Introductions, Guests** - None; no members of public
3. **Public Comments** – None; no members of public
4. **Non-Agenda Items**
 - a. There was a request to discuss “Solarize Mid-Coast Maine” – discussion of topic moved to #7
5. **Minutes of January 18, 2016** Already distributed, corrected, accepted and posted in the public-access GoogleDoc at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ODbzD1nBjnvCZBLFqA9PidAR0WvTFypSrczq_rnG-w8/edit?usp=sharing
6. **Review, adjustment of Workgroup subdivision, members, roles.**
 - a. Review of members in Workgroups:
 - 1) **Energy Supply & Generation:** Peter Galloway, Pete Kalajian, Marina Schauffler, Ken Gross, Anita Brosius-Scott
 - 2) **Energy Demand:** Brian Robinson, Sarah Holland, Marc Ratner
 - 3) **Energy Strategy, Communication and Education:** Dana Strout.
 - b. Workgroup tasks and organization
 - 1) We discussed that there are not enough volunteers for workgroup 3 (Strategy etc.); we need to re-distribute the tasks that this work group would do. Strategy will be discussed as a committee; communication and education materials will be prepared in the work groups that are working on relevant topics.
 - 2) Marc expressed concern about needing to be sensitive in approach to discussion with Ragged Mountain Redevelopment regarding energy issues in the design and

construction of the new lodge at the Snow Bowl. Sarah pointed out, as an architect, that it is important to address possible changes soon. We agreed there are things we can address right now.

- 3) Beedy Parker is interested in issues that the Committee addresses but is unable to volunteer as a committee member. She would like to assist as she can in the “Demand/Weatherization/Education” loop. She can be contacted at beedyparker@gwi.net.

7. Discussion of Workgroups' work, approach, priorities as discussed in work group meetings

a. Supply:

- 1) Municipal Solar Update: - Pete Kalajian - The workgroup discussed Camden's pursuit of placing solar panels on municipal roofs including the Public Safety Building, but with each proposed building, the town engineers (Gartley and Dorsky) state that, based on their evaluation, significant work would be required to support the panels. Bill Behrens of Revision Energy suggests that given these roadblocks, we should abandon the pursuit of rooftop solar and look instead for Town-owned land that could support a solar array. Ground-mounted arrays add 10% to the cost of the array. Two acres of land would be good. A Power-Purchase Agreement (PPA) [where the (non-tax-paying) town partners with a (tax-paying) investor to take advantage of the federal tax credits] would require an array that produces 125kW, which would require about one acre. In terms of savings per kilowatt hour, solar would be more economically beneficial in replacing the energy source for the small accounts (which cost more per kWh) than the large accounts such as the Snow Bowl (which cost less per kWh). The suggestion was that we find the town parcels and find a 2 acre cleared parcel and put in solar. The Transfer Station was discussed but dismissed as a potential site: the landfilled and covered sections are still settling, and the land may need to be reconfigured and regraded again; also MCSW (MidCoast Solid Waste Corp.) may be required to actually cover the landfilled sections with an impermeable cover. Too much is in flux to warrant a ground solar installation on the land. As for the roofs, changes in recycling methods are being discussed, with such changes possibly requiring reconfiguration of the existing buildings, making insecure the permanency of a rooftop solar installation at this time. Jim Guerra, Transfer Station Manager, is very enthusiastic about solar installations and energy savings in general and wants to incorporate such technology whenever and as soon as possible.

Investors: The idea is to locate the land and then locate “investors”. Revision Energy may be able to provide investors. Another possibility is to find local “angel investors.” The investors get a tax credit which they apply to their current budget (30 percent credit based on cost of construction, depreciated over seven years). They would also be receiving the income from the sale of the electricity the installation produces. After the seven years, investors sell back or gift the installation to the town. But, the Town needs to move ahead with a proposed site for the array.

Pete said he would attempt to locate potential parcels prior to the next meeting, along with a report on his discussion with Bill Behrens of Revision Energy.

- 2) State legislation: A new comprehensive solar legislation bill has just been drafted and is going through the legislature. Anita spoke on Maine not having a comprehensive solar bill and Maine is behind the curve. There was a state work group created, consisting of representatives of the various vested interests, that

crafted legislation to answer their various needs. The resulting drafted legislation is going to committee and proceeding forward which will take place in the next few months. There will be hearings coming up. The legislation will be helpful because only nine meters can come together for a cooperative group and this legislation will go beyond that and pave the way for large community installations. The big deal is that this will allow solar to scale up and perhaps increase large solar installations ten-fold in the future if this passes. Where the committee comes in is in educating the public and the republican legislators to this effect. This Committee is following the lead of other municipalities in asking our Select Board to sign a Resolve, to be sent to the Legislature, declaring Camden's support of comprehensive solar legislation which would permit larger cooperative solar arrays, among other things. Marina: if enough municipalities do this and there is a governor's veto (threatened), legislators may feel the support is strong enough to be willing to override a veto. Getting the Town to get behind the Resolve that Marina did is important, as well as talking to legislators in Augusta at the public hearings. Committee voted unanimously to support the submission of such a Resolve to the Select Board (a draft of which, by Marina, was read by the Committee), subject to further grammatical editing by the scrivener. Members are encouraged to assist in refining the wording within the next few days. The Resolve will be submitted for inclusion in the Camden Select Board meeting of March 15.

- 3) Presentation to the Select Board Anita will present the Resolve to the Select Board, hopefully on the March 15 agenda, and also bring the SB up to date on the work of the Committee.
 - 4) Rockland's energy work: Marina suggests we hear from Rockland's Energy Committee to learn what they are doing. We should ask Rockland's Energy Committee representative/chair to come to our next meeting (Larry Pritchett). Rockland, along with Falmouth and S. Portland, have been sending their representatives to Augusta every other week during the drafting of the proposed comprehensive solar energy legislation. A staff member from the Island Institute is also on Rockland's Energy Committee.
 - 5) Solarize MidCoast Sundog Solar [a solar installation company located in Searsport] has been selected by the MidCoast Economic Development District to implement a regional solar bulk-purchasing program, known as Solarize Midcoast Maine. The Committee discussed how to publicize this program along with other energy savings options for community members
 - 6) Public Information Session: The Committee suggested sponsoring a public information session to not only enable Sundog to present the Solarize MidCoast program of bulk solar purchasing, but also other programs and options that enable community members to reduce their energy use and install energy productions systems, such as PACE. The evening could include Dana Fisher from Efficiency Maine. Ken Gross, Committee member and director of programs at the Camden Public Library, will get back to the Committee regarding open dates at the Library for such a presentation. It could not be before May.
- b. **Demand:** The Demand workgroup did not meet. Sarah will get a report from the architects of the Snow Bowl Lodge regarding anticipated energy impacts of the building.
 - c. **Strategy:** No time for discussion beyond what was done above.

Adjourn 6:45pm

Post-Meeting News:

1. Tom Edge has sent in his notification that he regrettably must drop off the Committee due to schedule conflicts preventing him from attending meetings. He has been asked if he would be willing to help at the Workgroup level.
2. **Information Session by Energy Committee:** Ken Gross has reserved **May 31, 2016, 7:00 pm** (the day after Memorial Day) for a presentation at the Camden Public Library hosted by the Camden Energy and Sustainability Committee, to provide information to the public about various options available to them for energy saving, home sustainable energy production, Solarize MidCoast, and funding opportunities. Speakers will be invited to present options. → The Energy Committee needs to confirm this date with Ken, and come up with information for promoting the event. **Please weigh in on your approbation of this date.**
3. **Solarize MidCoast:** This is a regional bulk-purchasing program sponsored by MidCoast Economic Development District (MCEDD). Through a proposal and bidding process, Sundog Solar was selected as the provider based on a variety of criteria. According to the Pen Bay Pilot (February 18, 2016),
 - “This program will make Grid-Tied Solar Electric systems more available to homeowners and businesses in 20 towns, covering five counties from Cumberland to Waldo.” Further, “Sundog Solar will also be offering Mini-Split Heat Pumps and Off-Grid Solar Electric Systems at their regular pricing levels.
 - “The Solarize program encourages community-wide participation to meet the best pricing options, streamlines the solar purchasing process from start to finish, and furthers the goal of increasing renewable energy in Maine. Sundog Solar will discuss, design and install systems with the customer's energy needs and goals in mind, and will assist with the utility company net metering and town permitting process.
 - “The Solarize Midcoast Maine enrollment period has begun and **will run through June 30, 2016.**
 - “To find out more about Solarize Midcoast Maine contact Sundog Solar at (207) 548-1100 or visit solarizemidcoastmaine.com”

NOTE TO COMMITTEE MEMBERS: A May 31 public presentation in the CPL as proposed may be too late to enable people to take advantage of the Solarize MidCoast program.