



Minutes

May 12, 2016

Present: Mark Mullins, Brendan Welch, Aubrey Jaffer, Chris Rabinowitz, Margot Fleishman, Taissir Alani

Absent: Amy Lloyd, Suzy Enos, Carrie Sarno

Minute takers: Margot Fleishman

Members present: Mark Mullins, Chris Rabinowitz, Brendan Welch, Margot Fleischman

Members absent: Carrie Sarno, Suzy Enos

Also present: Terry Gleason, Michael O'Donnell

Meeting called to order 7:38 pm by Chair Mullins

First Parish Solar Project

Chris explained that First Parish Church is before the HDC to seek permission to install solar panels on their southern-facing roofs. The HDC is concerned primarily about the aesthetics, and asked First Parish for a sample of the solar panel material (flat, black, solar panels). Chris disclosed that she is a member of First Parish, but feels that the issue is that all property owners within the Historic District should have the right to get away from fossil fuel use if they wish. There are guidelines published by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions for installation of solar panels, which Margot circulated, and the HDC also references solar panels on page 19 of their own guidelines. Aubrey mentioned that there is a value in leadership in energy conservation. The ETF has also promoted programs like Solarize Bedford as well as CCA that affect individual property owners. The mission statement for the ETF would seem to indicate that the committee could have a position on this issue.

Moved by Aubrey, seconded by Chris, that the Bedford Energy Task Force recommend that the Historic District Commission promote the deployment of solar energy panels within the Historic District in a manner consistent with the Commission's guidelines, and in particular to approve solar panels for the First Parish Church, in order to:

- * enable the building owners to offset their energy costs,
- * reduce Bedford's carbon pollution and contribute to the reduction of climate change,
- * and promote Bedford's status as a leader in renewable energy.

Approved 3-1-1. Brendan voted no, Margot abstained.

Community Choice Aggregation

Mark reported that he had a meeting with the Town Manager, which was summarized in the April ETF



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minutes. Members' assignment for the past month was to reach out to other communities involved with CCA to find out the impact on the municipality's staff. Brendan contacted Trish, the Assistant Town Manager in Chelmsford, and she did not have any trouble, and encouraged our Town Manager to be in touch. In Melrose, the Energy Manager, Martha Grover, chose to be very hands-on during the early part of the process but then passed that responsibility along to Good Energy. During the opt-out period (about a month) she got 3-4 calls a day, but subsequently has not received very many calls. She reported that Good Energy had done a really good job. In retrospect, she would have allowed Good Energy to take the lead from the beginning. Mark also spoke with Kristy Williams, the Assistant Town Manager in the Town of Westborough, who reported that managing CCA didn't take much time. They used Peregrine and they handled all the presentations, the mailings and got them a good rate. They had two options, including a greener option, but the vast majority of residential customer chose the default options. Both Kristy and Martha stressed the importance of reaching out to seniors, and they had outreach meetings at their Senior Center. Chris reported that she was able to get print-outs from other towns that are participating in CCA. She also noticed that the information was hard to find on town websites, but could be found using Google. In identifying a staff person to help with this effort, Taissir spoke with Ruthie about whether Arlington was still interested in sharing an energy manager, but they are looking for a full-time person to also handle capital projects. We may follow a similar path, since we have several capital projects coming up. It was suggested that perhaps we could consider creating a regional energy consulting group similar to the Regional Housing Services Offices that Bedford participates in. Mark wondered if there might be a way to ask the question on the Energy Manager's list.

Behavioral Guidelines

Mark summarized the presentation that ETF received from Kate Crosby from the A-B School District a few months ago. They have reduced their energy consumption through behavior changes, and are one of the few programs in the country that has been successful. Kate stressed that the cost of funding her position was offset by the savings. Her program reached into the school culture, and made great use of the staff and students to make positive and sustaining changes. This requires the schools to be engaged in the goal of reducing energy. The empowerment of people who spend a lot of time in the classrooms, like the custodians and the kitchen staff, was also highlighted. Mark noted that this is a growing field and that there are consultants that design programs around behavior change. This might be one way that the town could take this on, as it saves money and fosters environmentally-friendly behaviors. Taissir noted that money probably wouldn't be an issue, since we have Ruthie's salary still in the budget. We might also consider paying a couple of teachers a stipend to work on this sort of program within the schools. There may be enough money from various sources to hire a consultant and create a program. Taissir will work on a proposal for how to structure this and what the costs would be.

Energy Usage

Taissir shared all the stats for every department electrical usage. He will share gas usage data at the next meeting. The good news is that overall, the energy use is coming down, but there are still some



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challenges, especially regarding the schools, just because of the number of hours the buildings are used.

Solar Panels

Taissir reported that he was contacted by someone regarding a virtual net metering project. The solar panels would be installed in Chelmsford, and we would enter into a 20 year PPA. Taisir will get more information, and Mark noted that MAPC may also be looking into that model.

Street Light Tariff

Brendan will contact MAPC to find out if there is any update on this issue.

Meeting adjourned 9:03 pm.