

WALLINGFORD ENERGY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the April 4, 2017 Meeting

Ken Welch called the meeting to order at 6:35. Present: John Armstrong, Ralph Nimtz, Ken Welch and Jay White. Milton Moore joined the meeting at 7:00.

March Minutes. Jay moved the approval of the March minutes. There were no objections.

WES Dashboard. Ken reported that the components of the SiteSage monitoring system have been received by the school. He promised to contact Gary Fredette to check whether he has had chance to inventory the shipment and see how much longer he will be on the job "I'd like to get this installed while Gary is still at the school."

John reported that he had read the installation instructions and that it looked fairly straightforward. Jay recommended that we hire an electrician named Oscar who, he was sure, "will be reasonable." Ken assigned John the job of buying a browser-capable smart TV to serve as a school hallway energy generation and use monitor. Ken also asked John to contact Christian at PowerWise to go over the installation procedure, ask about reducing clutter in the electrical boxes and get instructions about monitoring the subpanels in the boiler room.

Ken reported that he had seen Brenda Spafford of GMP at the Better Build Conference and learned that the school's usage still triggers a peak demand fee. "It happens at lunch time which means that our suspicions about a large load in the kitchen are correct. We just don't know which appliance or appliances are triggering the fee and the dashboard should help with this. On the other hand, Brenda mentioned that peak demand fees were being phased out."

"To be replaced, I suspect, with real time rate management," Jay hypothesized.

Collaboration with Other Energy Committees. "The other think I learned at Better Build," Ken reported, "is that there are active energy committees in Mt. Holly and Cavendish. Should I reach out to them?" Everyone agreed.

Energy Plan. John was curious about how the state and region will define energy production targets. "Are they talking about peak output or output over time." Jay said that he was sure it is stated as peak output. "In some ways that's strange but with most of these technologies, peak output defines the size and therefore the land use impact of a project."

Ralph asked which solar sites we are trying to identify. "I want to confirm that when we talk about mapping we're talking about industrial scale solar and not rooftop installations. Sites that make less than 150 kW are easy to permit, so issues of standing before the PSB do not apply for them. It's with big projects that the town needs standing."

Ken was worried about taking stands on individual development sites. "That's political and I don't want to get our committee involved in politics."

"But we're an agency of a municipal government," John argued. "Of course we have a 'political' role. We have to promote discussion of these issues and help create a consensus. The PSB won't give the town standing if they don't believe that the town plan reflects the will of the community. Without that, it's just somebody's opinion."

"The least we can do," Ralph added, "is a technical evaluation of sites and that means that we'll need to do some driving around. But obviously we don't dictate. We're volunteers, not officials."

Ken suggested that we rely on the Planning Commission to do the heavy lifting. "These decisions are comparable to the zoning decisions they already make: a ruling by a town body about what you can and cannot do with your property."

"I think we should get in touch with Dave Ballou," Jay added. "He's got experience I think we'll find helpful."

Meeting was adjourned at 7:35. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 2 at 6:30.

— Submitted by John Armstrong