

Branford Clean Energy Ad Hoc Committee Minutes 6/8/20

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Present: Greg Ames, Bob Babcock, Elena Cahill, Marshall Cox, Bill Horne, Sharon Huttner, Shirley McCarthy, John Prins

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Guests: Mike Cohen, James Killelea, Eunice Mahler, Dan Rabin

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT

Bill Horne approved minutes from the last meeting, 5/11/20.

Bob Babcock seconded the meeting approval.

Energy Plan - Greg Ames and Bill Horne- sent email to PACE Mark Scully -for clarification - thank you all who helped.

John asked what will the next steps be for the plan once it goes to the First Selectman- Shirley advised she believed it will likely go the selectmen for input/vote, then department heads and press release.

Buildings- Greg and Bill submitted document to First Selectman regarding policy and processes for upgrading buildings - shifted focus for energy policy. At May 11th meeting Jamie encouraged Greg and Bill to meet with public building committee members Rick Saltz and Jim Killelea. The Chair of that committee, Peter Banca, would also like to meet. They will be meeting this Wednesday evening; Shirley McCarthy will also attend. Will discuss how our committee can interact with public building commission and be more proactive with incorporating renewable energy at early stages. Talked about Animal Shelter and when they can get involved.

Electric Charger Policy- Shirley, Greg and Bill attended the last P&Z meeting. Greg read a statement about renewable energy and our goals for Branford. Again brought up putting in conduits (and extensively planting of native trees) for electric vehicle charging stations at the Aldi's/bank complex. Regarding how many electric charging stations can be put in, Bill was able to obtain a guideline overview of other municipalities from Bruce Becker. Applicants agreed to install the conduits not the chargers at this time. The P&Z made it a condition that they include the conduits. Next step: work out what the density of chargers should be on the site, based on use. Plan to work with planning office on regulation of electric chargers so consistent regulation.

Heat Smart- Mike Cohen & Dan Rabin- Waiting for final version of the MOU from Town attorney. Viewed their marketing plan. Reached out to library and they will help advertise on their Facebook page and will make a press release through the First Selectman's office. Preparing a launch for when the MOU is signed. Discussed the option if they have the rudiments of a solar program to mention this at the same time when they advertise the Heatsmart program. Market the residential Home Energy Solutions audit, Heatsmart program and solar campaign at one time. Shirley advised she discussed this with Mark Scully early on. Mike Cohen spoke with Mark Scully recently and he is on board now.

Solar Companies Interfacing- Shirley and Elena talked with them, then met with Jim Finch and Jamie Cosgrove and they advised that they want the energy plan first then

when we meet with solar companies they have to fit into the energy plan. Also discussion about consulting firm managing projects and putting projects out to auction.

Best Practice Sheet for Solar Clients- John Prins advises he believes we should prepare a document for residents who want solar - a best practice guideline of a sort. Bill and Shirley both worked with Aegis solar for their homes and own their solar but there are many options available to potential customers that can be difficult to navigate. Battery Storage Program- Eunice Mahler- spoke about having a battery with her solar: Eversource solutions connect - LG Battery and Tesla - Eversource uses battery to shave peak demand

<https://www.eversource.com/content/ct-c/residential/save-money-energy/manage-energy-costs-usage/demand-response/battery-storage-demand-response>

Electric School Buses- Sharon Huttner -Tool Kit Online- another module this week. Heard from many bus companies - Lyon- Motiv- receiving information about logistics and trying to answer Board of Education questions- John Prins believes Board of Education is on board but at this time but is currently dealing with COVID related complexities. John recommends we answer Meredith's questions; Emily Basham of the Green Bank said that she would, but has not yet. Sharon states she learned we cannot access VW (Volkswagon) monies due to age of buses but we can access DERA monies. Eunice recommends reviewing ages of buses again; she found an exception in reviewing the criteria for application.

Branford, Sharon and Eunice are certified through Tool Kit Online. You can see the national conference site and Panel that Sharon was on via ElectricESBtoolkit Facebook page. Sharon will send out access.

Climate mitigation areas still not covered: Shirley discussed a few topics: tree planting and plant based diet. Frank Carano spoke with Shirley about plant based diets and the Branford Gets Fresh program. Shirley wonders if we should make a bigger effort in this area? Bill believes it an environmental issue; Dan stated raising food animals takes a lot of energy; Sharon wonders if the public building commission should be involved with landscaping; Elena spoke about methane gas from animals; Bill spoke of a program from the state to help with capturing methane.

Town of Branford Sustainability Hire: Wondering the status of the hire. Bill will check with Jamie since he needs that person on the Branford Sustainability committee.

Sharon motioned to adjourn the meeting and Bill seconded it.