

# **Greensboro Energy and Climate Action Committee (“ECAC”)**

Minutes - October 23, 2024, 6pm

**Present:** Liz Steel, Beth Meachem, Liz Hatch, Blake Auchincloss, Erika Karp

## **1. Check-ins**

Meeting opened with introductions and individual interests around energy and weatherization. Interests included climate mitigation, community solar and educational outreach into the Community.

## **2. Current project status update**

- Activities of the committee over the past year were reviewed which included the informational gathering at the UCC which brought in weatherization experts, the VEEP class at the library on weatherization, and our presence at the Greensboro Farmer’s Market in collaboration with the Community Garden promoting sustainable living, where experts were invited each week to be at the table.
- Details of the MERP mini-grant for \$4000 that led to the creation of the multi-town \$aveEnergyNEK group, were discussed, which led to the submission for the full MERP Implementation grant for approximately \$211,000 to address weatherization needs in the Library. Liz Steel also shared information about the DOE grant that was approved for \$65,000 to hire a consultant to assist with a climate mitigation plan. The Selectboard has determined that, as the town has never received a federal grant and does not currently have the infrastructure or capacity to handle federal grants, we are not going to pursue this grant at this time. Instead we will look at grant opportunities through the Vermont Climate Action Office to assist with funding to address climate mitigation challenges.

- Liz Hatch indicated that the measuring for WindowDressers is complete and the build for the window inserts will happen between October 31 and November 3rd in Glover. ***Liz H was going to check the status of Greensboro volunteers and let us know if any help was needed.***

### **3. Town Website**

We now have an energy page on the Greensboro Town Website. A template will be created by Maya once we post the content we want to include using wordpress admin. ***Liz H volunteered to take on the responsibility for our webpage. Liz S offered to provide support with deciding the content we want to post.***

### **4. Town Plan – Energy Chapter**

The 2026 Town Plan will have a chapter on energy, which the Planning Commission has asked the ECAC to work on. Liz S suggested that the ***committee should all read the existing Town Plan energy chapter*** to begin this work. To get current data to create an updated energy plan for Greensboro, there are a number of good sources, including the Vermont Municipal Climate Change Vulnerability Indicators Tool, the Efficiency Vermont 2023 Energy Burden Report, and the Energy Action Network 2024 Annual Progress Report. The Planning Commission is working on presenting the new town plan at the 2026 Town Meeting for a vote. Between now and then the Planning Commission will have community discussions on a variety of topics which have been identified as priorities in the 2024 Town Survey. Blake pointed out that the plan should include action steps and funding resources. Erika suggested that we find out what the Emergency Planning group has been/will be doing and consider how we collaborate with them. There is concern that potential flooding issues at Caspian Lake Dam need to be addressed. Blake suggested we ask them to bring their action plans to a future meeting.

### **5. Review goal(s) for 2024/5**

Liz S mentioned that the 2024 Town Survey responses are currently being analyzed and the two top responses to the energy question: *Would you like the Town of Greensboro Planning Commission to support any of the following renewable energy installations?* were Community Solar (61%) and EV Chargers (42%). It was agreed that these should be priority areas for the committee as a way of responding to the community and letting them know they have been heard. ***Liz S will share responses to all the energy related questions with the whole committee when available.***

Between now and next meeting it was decided that we would reach out to Hardwick Electric to determine how we can encourage them to register and provide energy incentives to customers, as well as find out logistics for beginning community solar conversation. ***Liz S volunteered to send an email to Scott Johnstone, the current/interim Managing Director.***

## **6. Meeting schedule for 2025**

It was agreed that we would meet quarterly in 2025 – dates TBD. Smaller working groups on different projects would meet as needed on an ongoing basis.

## **7. AOB**

- ***Liz S asked Erika if she would help with further research into the \$6,000 in the town bank account tagged for the energy committee.*** Hoping we can see if the funds can be reallocated to current projects.
- ***Liz S, Beth and Blake will attend the Climate Action Plan input session: buildings & thermal, 10/24/24***
- ***Liz S and Blake will prepare the write up for the 2024 Town Report – due 12/1***
- ***Beth will share feedback from the Efficiency Vermont webinars on current rebate programs: Home Repair and Heat Pumps.*** We should promote these programs in the community through Front Porch Forum, Facebook

community pages, the Library \$ave Energy NEK webpage and the Energy & Climate Action page on the Town websites.