

Minutes WE3C meeting 2/4/13
3rd Floor Conference Room, Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Present: Ken Mirvis, chair, Jaime Haber, Lauri Murphy, Peter Brooks, Terese Hammerle, Matt Riegert, Charlie Bering, Meredith Fields

Absent: Stephane Acel-Green, Raeleen Parsons, Doug Denny-Brown, Brian Hebeisen

1. Leo Sullivan, from Global Montello presented information on electric power community choice aggregation (CCA) that allows NStar customers to negotiate as a group. The town could opt to do this with the possibility of a 7-10% savings on the energy portion (not the delivery charges) of the bill for all customers in town except any who chose to opt out. Rates are volatile and this strategy reduces overall rates by accessing a choice of vendors. Potential average savings per household could be \$130-150/year. In addition, there would be the possibility of increasing the proportion of electricity produced from renewable sources (NStar currently provides 6% green electricity which is required by law). Cost for green would be higher but town could choose what %. There was discussion of possibly paying same rate as currently while increasing green %. Advice from DOER could be sought. Current participants in CCA include Cape Light Compact (Cape & Vineyard), Marlboro, Lunenburg and Ashland.

2. Next Step Living (NSL) update: Gift certificates to local businesses are being offered as an added incentive for getting a home energy audit.

3. There was discussion of apparent lack of availability of energy audits and improvements for housing with more than 4 units and for small businesses in town, since these are not covered by NSL. The committee would like to find a way to make the same sorts of services readily available to larger apt buildings and to small businesses that NSL does for households.

4. Newest version of website was sent out by Gideon Shreiber and went "live" this week. Ken recommends committee members all review WE3C link on town website.

5. Climate Change talk on March 5 at Library: Ken has sent information to Tab and Community Cable, Watertown Patch (blog). Flyer needs to be designed, printed and posted, also sandwich boards. Terese will work on flyer design, Ken will contact John Massie (NSL). Flyers should go to library, town hall, MCAN, Deb Peterson (WCES), Tony Palomba, Mark Harris (clergy), Trees for Watertown. On March 5 committee members should arrive 6-6:30 to set up, and everyone is asked to bring several clean mugs for water and coffee. Ken will bring coffee maker. Charlie will check on AV.

6. Solarize Mass grant application due 2/20. Ken attended Webinar and will meet with Steve Magoon tomorrow about zoning information related to this. All towns that participated last year more than doubled their PV totals. Arlington and Melrose both participated last year, Arlington had 700-800 homes interested, half qualified for solar installation and there was a 20% yield. Matt is willing to be the “Solar Coach” for Watertown. Town liaison would be Steve Magoon or Gideon Shreiber—Ken will co-ordinate with them. State would arrange PV installer(s) for us. The committee supports pursuing the grant.

7. ESCo update: Boilers and other upgrades are being done. It would be interesting to know and to publicize how much money and carbon are being saved.

8. Next meeting: Monday, March 4, 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Meredith Fields