

Minutes WE3C Meeting 10/20/15, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

Present: Stephane Acel-Green, co-chair; Ed Lewis, Town Energy Manager; Meredith Fields; Matt Riegert; Helen Soussou; Charlie Bering; Mike Anctil; guest, JuliAnn O'Neil. Absent: Ken Mirvis, Zach Zevitas, Brian Hebeisen, Kevin Doyle, Lauri Murphy.

1. The July minutes were approved. Since there was not a quorum at the September meeting, no official meeting was held
2. Report from Ed Lewis, Energy Manager:
 - a. LED streetlight project. Ed is working on procurement of LED streetlights with \$300,000 in grants presented by DOER and Eversource. This work has included collaboration via MAPC with other Massachusetts municipalities who have received similar grant funding. A group procurement process is being investigated to maximize use of the grant funding. The grants require installation within one year of presentation.
 - b. Performance contract update. The final items of the ESCO performance contract were completed last week.
 - c. Cadmus PV site evaluation. Cadmus has significant concerns about getting developers interested in PV deployment on Town properties, which were confirmed by discussions with six developers to gauge interest and feasibility. The unified consensus of developers is that roof age is a concern where systems should be installed on new roofs or costs associated with removal and reinstallation of equipment factored into the PPA. Most developers are also skeptical about a project qualifying for the federal tax credit which requires installation by the end of 2016. And, the potential size of projects on existing Town properties are marginal, with the exception of the High School which has a building with 10+ years of life remaining. The general consensus was that a PV project could be built, but it ultimately would not be a significant cost savings for the Town. The committee decided to table further discussion until a better site presents itself and/or the federal tax credits are extended. We explored the possibility of turning Cadmus work thus far into a white paper that can be utilized for future PV planning processes.
 - d. Fair on the Square. Ed presented that a presence at the Fair on the Square went very well and was able to reach many people in the community. The majority of interest was in residential PV and energy audits. A suggestion was made that Ed or the committee present some of this information at the Senior Center. The 'Sustainability section' worked with other environmental groups clustered together. Booth informational posters were helpful in providing talking points and photo's (Police Station and DPW solar arrays) generated a lot of conversation and booth traffic. The committee thanks Ed, Stephane and Meredith for their time and efforts to represent the committee at the event.

3. Municipal Aggregation:

- a. Stephane presented on the general premise of Municipal Aggregation, or also referred to in some cases as “Community Choice”, and shared a conversation he had with the Massachusetts Climate Action Network (MCAN). Other Massachusetts towns have successfully implemented energy aggregation agreements which, in some cases, include requirements for certain types of “green energy”, and even specifically from Massachusetts. Such an agreements could be an “opt-in” model (where citizens can choose to join), or an “opt-out” model (where citizens can choose to not participate free of charge), but “opt-in” agreements are generally not attractive to aggregators. Any such agreement would require Town Council approval. Stephane to invite MCAN to present further information, and possibly a case study from another community similar to Watertown.

4. Committee’s Ongoing Strategy.

- a. The committee explored and debated which major energy and environment issues they ought to be tackling in the months to come. Topics discussed included the following:
 - i. Increasing the committee’s exposure to the Town. The consensus is that many people in the Town are unaware of the good work being done by the committee.
 - ii. Another evening informational presentation/seminar may be worthwhile and well accepted, as the committee has put on in the past.
 - iii. Presentations at the Senior Center (and schools, churches, etc.) on energy audits and other programs available to people in Watertown.
 - iv. Networking with other town energy committees, potentially via DOER. Stephane suggested that committee members reach out to a couple nearby energy committees to have a casual conversation, and many members of the committee agreed to do so.
 - v. Exploring the feasibility of conduit hydropower in Town water mains to generate electricity.
 - vi. Community Choice Aggregation
 - vii. Conducting a formal Greenhouse Gas Inventory of Watertown

Next meeting: 11/18/15, 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Riegert