

Energy and Climate Action Committee

Minutes January 13th, 2022

NEXT MEETING WILL BE February 10th at 4:30pm

Present: Paul Cass arrived at (4:44), Kevin Clements, Susan Chandler, Richard Kendall, David Jacobson, Hakim Janah and John Londa, Michael Hermann,

Virtually present: Martin Kulik and Richard Kendall (arrived at 4:46), attorney James Rosenblum, Abe Boyle (from my generation solar) and David Bryant

Call to Order: Susan Chandler called the meeting to order at 4:32

Review of minutes: Amend minutes to include John Londa's community engagement plan idea to be discussed on the agenda for today.

Approval of December's minutes as amended: Hakim motioned to approve, seconded was not clear as I was not present virtually yet to clarify. Vote to approve w/o Richard and Paul 6-0-0

**Public Comment:** Roof Top Solar Panel Installation

Barbara Bryant informed us of her efforts to get solar panels on her house. She presented information about her two meetings with the Orleans Old Kings Highway Regional Historic District Committee. She went before the commission after submitting three applications. She was rejected initially but after making changes to her solar array, and adding greenery, her application was approved. Her story is a good example of how this review process may not be apparent to someone who would like to install solar panels on their own home. Our Committee has heard several stories like this. Barbara developed a Power Point (see attached) and made the following points.

Question: How, if Orleans residents are interested in installing rooftop solar panels, and the Orleans Energy Committee is promoting solar, can we make it easier for Orleans homeowners to install rooftop solar systems while being cognizant of the rules and regulations of the OKHRHDC?

Barbara filed an appeal based on several issues: She said the Committee did not have or review all of the material submitted prior to reviewing her case; the Committee did not weigh the energy advantage of solar panels; she did not receive a written determination; there was no hardship determination and her house is not in a well-travelled or historic area.

She noted that there will be substantial green house emission reductions if more homes in Orleans use solar panels. This is the stated goal of the Orleans Energy and Climate Action Committee. Other committees have sometimes been more flexible in their decisions to permit solar panels.

**Recommendations:**

- ↓ Ask the Committee to post applications on line so other can see what a successful application look like
- ↓ Remind the Committee to provide written reasons for any denial (as required in their guidelines) and put these in the minutes
- ↓ Ask the committee to post all appeal decisions
- ↓ Support Senate Bill 1326 (Senator Cyr's) bill to support solar installations

Susan moved and Kevin seconded the motion.

- Our Committee will write a letter to the Orleans OKHRHD Committee and note that we have heard from applicants that the Committee has not provided determinations, in writing, stating the reasons and justifications for a denial of solar panels installations on residents' homes.
- Our Committee will recommend to the OKHRHD that they post the details of successful applications for others to review.
- Our Committee will write a letter to the Select Board stating our support for Senate Bill 1326 and recommend that the Select Board also support this legislation.

Approved unanimously by all to adapt these recommendations.

James Rosenblum commented briefly as Barbara attorney through her process. Perhaps there is a need for clearer solar panel guidelines and perhaps some modification would be possible like "minimally visible" rather than an outright ban on solar panels being visible.

#### Green Community Act Update

Ron Collins sent the committee an email that he will be meeting with Tom Daly and the water department on January 14<sup>th</sup> to re-inspect the existing conditions, including meeting an electrical contractor to finalize the scope and cost of the upgrade for the compressor.

David Jacobsen noted he could not find Table 4 and reported not finding any useable data in the excel sheets that we received in an email for the green communities report

John Londa did not see the compressor project on the green communities update

Hakim found a large spreadsheet of the 5 year plan that had many details

John and Hakim volunteered to do an executive summary of the report to make sense of this for this committee to make sense of what Ron had given us last meeting.

#### Announcements:

Susan brought up the Citizens Forum upcoming meetings in February.

Student Representative possibility Bailey Nobili is interested as a resident of Eastham and is a student at the Nauset Regional High School. We will see if Baily would like to begin to come to meetings that is up to her as she evaluates this opportunity. Martin also mentioned the CC Commission Climate student ambassadors who might be interested.

Martin brought up the point that this position should be open to more than just Nauset Regional High students and perhaps also consider Charter School students.

Michael commented that the Select Board had discussed the idea of including students and the members felt it was best to leave any student involvement up the individual committees.

Michael mentioned that he brought up the idea at the Select Board meeting that in the future, implementation of energy savings plans be identified and costed out in the feasibility studies in those plans for the town .

The Outer Cape Energy Committees is supporting asking the Cape Cod Collaborative to investigate the idea of electrification the buses for Nauset schools. Martha Vineyard has started doing this this and there may be private grant money available. The Collaborative has recently replaced their older diesel buses with propane. and they do have a bus driver training program with electric buses and charging stations at the High School.

The Outer Cape Committees are also planning to work on an program with local hotels and motels to support installing charging stations.

Michael mentioned the idea of an energy efficient bus/vehicle that could help transfer people around town and to the beaches. Richard mentioned his experience using LSVs (street legal golf carts) in Chatham and the possibility of uses of these vehicles in low speed zones, <30mph

John recommended a format for our Committee's quarterly report. He agreed to give our committee a draft format at our next meeting. Perhaps April will be our time to try to submit a report and present it to the Select Board if necessary. We will start to assemble a draft.

Community Outreach and Education Plan: John mentioned the ideas to the beginnings of this plan and what we would need to evaluate and tweak year after year about programs and other items of interest to citizens.

David mentioned other carbon sink items that we could promote like tree planting etc.

Susan mentioned our lack of a budget, but we could request funds from an appropriate town body for printing funds etc. Also, perhaps we could put out a quarterly or so report that highlights an area of energy interest. Paul said we could use the local TV for publicity. We also discussed press releases and perhaps energy reduction ideas, like Mass Save, heat pumps, community solar, carbon sink items, tree planting, etc. to be put on the Town's website. Maybe one good idea every two weeks to educate the public on what individuals can do?

Equity statement once again as a future agenda discussion item about how this technology is unattainable by low income individuals.

Agenda items for next month:

We had to give up our Zoom link so this topic got cut short. Items to consider:

- ‡ Developing an Equity Statement
- ‡ Green Community Act Update
- ‡ Committee Report format
- ‡ Solar Capacity
- ‡ OTHER?

Motion to Adjourn, made by Rich seconded by Kevin made hastily as we needed to vacate the room for another meeting starting.

Vote to adjourn: 8-0-0.

Meeting ended at 6:46pm

Respectfully Submitted

Susan Chandler, Chair