

WEAC MEETING MINUTES- January 2022

Online meeting, Thursday, 1/20/22 @ 7:30 PM

Members in attendance: Julie Gervais, Claire Galkowski, Kate La Croix, Brian Bayer, Maria Costantini, Sue McGown, Steve Harte, Juliana Belding

Others in attendance: Ellen Rollings, Tom Philbin, Srirup Kumar (Impact Bioenergy)

Routine business: Approval of November and December 2021 minutes.

Topics discussed w/next steps:

Update on Amendments to Solar Zoning Regulations (Ellen Rollings):

- 1) Solar zoning amendments submitted and Planning Board public hearing process is scheduled to begin.
- 2) Roof-mounted → building department.
- 3) Ground-mounted or other free-standing (small scale) → Town Planner for admin review.
- 4) Over 10,000 SF of space/over a certain kWh generation or non-residential → Planning Board EIDR with public process, but still by right; cannot be denied for aesthetic reasons.
- 5) Questions raised:
 - a. Is the clause requiring a maintenance plan for the solar installation necessary for a residential install? Could it pose an unnecessary impediment? Is it more relevant for a commercial install?
 - b. With continually improving solar tech, is it a good idea to put a kWh production limit on the installations? Isn't the physical size of greater relevance to the Planning Board?

Next steps:

- 1) Ellen will bring WEAC's questions back to the Planning Board.

CCE Update:

- 1) Westwood has DPU's preliminary approval of the plan.
- 2) Good Energy will submit for final approval by the end of January; no specifics on when we can expect final approval from the DPU.
- 3) Maria, Juliana, and Brian have been developing a script for a video (5-7 minutes) that we could show to the residents of Westwood to explain CCE. We did a script read-through so the group could hear how it sounds.
 - a. Suggestion to clarify difference between supply cost and delivery cost for listeners/readers.
 - b. Suggestion to stress that the electricity is from local sources.
 - c. Suggestion to streamline the presentation of the three options people have and refer to website in order to shorten the video a bit.
 - d. Suggestion to revise the pricing chart to make the fluctuations more obvious; also to show total average cost per kWh in a chart.

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- e. Need to update the energy source map of New England.

Next steps:

- 1) Script will be revised with updated information as it becomes available.

Tree-Plenish Update:

- 1) WEAC previously voted to allocate \$200 for the WHS effort; town has approved this.
- 2) WEAC will need to find a municipal location to plant the trees it is funding. Looking for input from the schools, etc. on areas of need.
- 3) When the time comes, WEAC could get together for the planting.

WEAC Vice Chair Position:

- 1) Jen Atkins needed to resign, so we need a new Vice Chair.
- 2) Sue McGown volunteered to fill the role until the next formal election.

Impact Bioenergy Presentation (Srirup Kumar):

- 1) Impact Bioenergy manufactures and maintains anaerobic digesters to turn food waste into energy.
- 2) Nationally, there is increasing interest in dealing with food waste differently to reduce the methane released during decomposition.
- 3) The digesters produce clean fuel (Organic Renewable Natural Gas- ORNG) and plant food.
- 4) Experimenting with CNG vehicles using the ORNG.
- 5) Carbon-negative potential.
- 6) "Meaningful local green jobs in the circular economy."
- 7) Questions:
 - a. How much maintenance is required? A few times per week by a tech.
 - b. Is it intended for households? Usually pre-consumer for the wet system. A different system is better for post-consumer.
 - c. How could this be used in Westwood? Potentially, dealing with food waste in the schools.

New Business:

Save Hale Campaign:

- 1) Westwood's Hale Task Force on this topic will present to the Select Board at the meeting on Monday, 1/24 at 6:30 PM. WEAC members encouraged to attend.

Adjourned: 9:37 PM

Next meeting date: February 17, 2022 at 7:30 PM