

ENERGY COMMISSION

COMSTOCK COMMUNITY CENTER
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Wilton, CT 06897

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Debra Thompson-Van
Chairperson
Peter Wrampe
Vice Chairman
Kevin Gardiner
Secretary
AnnaMarie Bilella
Patrice Gillespie
Glenn Hemmerle
Gil Hollander
Jim Jarvie
Eileen Griffin

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BY: 

WILTON ENERGY COMMISSION
Meeting, Wednesday February 21, 2018
Comstock
7:02 pm
Minutes

Attending WEC members: Debra Thompson-Van, Peter Wrampe, Kevin Gardiner, Patrice Gillespie, Jim Jarvie, AnnaMarie Bilella, Eileen Griffin

Absent WEC members: Gil Hollander, Glenn Hemmerle

Other Attendees: Mark Robbins (MHR Development), Sarah Curtis (public)

1. Debra Thompson-Van called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.
2. Introductions to new member, Eileen Griffin.
3. Approval of minutes of January 17, 2018 regular meeting – First, Peter Wrampe; Second, AnnaMarie Bilella. All in favor, with 1 abstention, Eileen Griffin.
4. Mark Robbins, of MHR Development, shared a Solar Project Progress Report. System Witness Test for Miller-Driscoll and Middlebrook systems are scheduled for March 1, 2018.

PPA for High School and Cider Mill are still being contracted. The Miller-Driscoll, Middlebrook and WHS PPA mark the lowest-priced PPA in CT Green Bank history, and also the largest municipal solar project CT Green Bank has ever funded in Fairfield County.

The ZREC program is only expected to be extended 1 year, so the TOW has a 12 month window to secure as much funding as we can, as new trade tariffs in 2019 will likely increase the cost of importing solar panels; and therefor, increase the cost of future projects.

Middlebrook has more roof capacity, and once the system is energized, we can apply for more ZRECs to expand capacity on that roof (we have two weeks beginning March 6 to apply for small ZRECs).

Debra made a motion to recommend that Chris Burney (Wilton Director of Public Works) should work with Mark Robbins to apply for small ZRECs for Middlebrook. Second by Kevin. All were in favor with no abstentions.

MHR would also like to explore cost-justified upgrades to existing school equipment to reduce energy consumption (e.g., over-use of oven hoods), and also perform a solar battery storage pilot to study whether or not there are significant energy usage and cost savings reductions that can be attained through solar battery storage (grant money can potentially be available from the Kresge Foundation).

Public Comment: Sarah Curtis said that Comstock is an emergency location for the town, it would seem that Comstock should install solar for energy resiliency purposes. Debra commented that it had been reviewed in the past, but that this should be considered for our updated Clean Energy Plan. Further, future new buildings like Police and Fire Stations should be built from the start with clean energy.

5. Patrice discussed the Wilton Go Green Zero Waste Fair, Sunday, March 25, from 11:00am-4:00pm ET; at the Wilton Field House. Peter recommended a map of Wilton with all of the Wilton homes that have solar installed. Peter will provide the map by EOD Sunday (2/25). Peter will send an email to coordinate who can cover the table during which time slots so that we have full coverage for the duration of the fair by WEC members.

Public Comment: Sarah Curtis suggested at the Fair, that the WEC report how much money has been saved with our clean energy projects and illustrate what the value of that savings equates to (e.g., the cost of the Norwalk River Trail)? AnnaMarie is going to schedule a sub-committee meeting about messaging for our table at the fair.

Peter and Patrice are planning to meet with Daphne and Dana of Wilton Go Green (WGG) prior to March 5, to confirm whether WGG is going to formally participate in Sustainable CT.

6. Peter gave a FOIA update. In between meetings, WEC members can pose questions via email to the full group, but responses must go directly to the sender and not to the full group (e.g. cannot "reply all"). The receiver of the response must then update the group in the next WEC Meeting. This will comply with FOIA requirements.
7. Clean Energy Accelerator Update - Kevin

11 Towns were represented (including Wilton). It was nice to be around so many like-minded Connecticutans, and to see how highly regarded Wilton is as a clean energy leader in the state.

We talked about strategies for how to have a more effective meeting, how to connect with people who may not be educated on clean energy/environmental issues, and recommended some books.

- i. **"Vital Lies, Simple Truths", by Daniel Goleman**
- ii. **"Start with Why", Simon Sinac**
- iii. **"Creating Regenerative Cities" by Herbert Girardet**

I learned that raiding the CT Green Bank actually costs the state of CT money in the long-run because each dollar in the bank, generates \$4 for the state in energy cost savings.

Wilton2029.org Includes a link to each town's POCD. It was recommended that a town's POCD should inform and change your town's Planning & Zoning Regulations.

****Patrice recommended divvying up the P&Z Regulations in Wilton to determine corrective measures that we can recommend in our POCD. Patrice, Eileen, and Gill will take the lead on reviewing our P&Z Regulations.**

The Accelerator group unanimously decided to continue meeting; but plans to setup local meetings (potentially based around COGs) so that more folks from each local commission can join.

Two sub-committees are being formed by the larger Accelerator group:

- i. Advocate for Energy Management at the State-Level.
- ii. Communications and Outreach Committee

8. Eileen would like to join the CT Energy Google List. After she gets her Wilton email address setup, Peter will invite her onto the list.
9. Wilton POCD update – Debra reviewed the POCD schedule as posted on the town website and overviewed the process. She indicated she could not attend the April 19 meeting, Peter Wrampe volunteered to attend on the WEC's behalf.

Upcoming Working Group Topics (Typically 7:00pm-9:00pm).

- i. February 22, 2018, Trackside – Housing
- ii. March 15, 2018, Library Brubeck Room – Route 7 and Transportation
- iii. April 19, 2018, Trackside – Community Facilities and Infrastructure
- iv. May 17, 2018, Trackside – Wilton Center and Villages
- v. June 21, 2018, Trackside (TBD for graduation date) – Conservation, Preservation and Sustainability
- vi. July and August, 2018 – no Joint Working Group meetings presently scheduled.
- vii. Fall 2018 – to be scheduled in June based on progress, but will likely focus on drafting goals, objectives, strategies and developing and launching a statistically valid phone survey.

WEC Members should attend as much as possible.

Additional ideas proposed as topics for the Housing Meeting on Feb 22:

- How to setup/equip your garage for electric car charging
- Position your garage to maximize hours of sunlight
- Route 7 enhancements will be recommended for Transportation.

****Additional ideas should be sent directly to Debra with no cc: to other WEC Members**

10. Conclusion of Clean Energy Community (CEC) Programs, and Marketing/Communications Ideas
Debra will summarize the results of the CEC program and introduce Sustainable CT at the March 5, Board of Selectmen Meeting, but is not looking for commitment at that time. Sharing the information is simply meant to inform the BOS of WEC's recommendations.

Consider opportunities to promote our progress on becoming one of only 9 (out of 168) CT Towns to receive the CEC Gold Standard, and Wilton's most recent Solar Projects. Jim drafted and handed out a press release; WEC members will email him feedback directly (no cc: to other members). Peter was very impressed with the Press Release.

Jim suggested that we can likely post 4-5 times per month on social media given all of our activities and accomplishments.

11. Public Comment- no further public comment (see Public Comments in items 4 & 5)

12. Member Comment-

- i. Patrice – handed out the Clean Water Action Letter, written by the Clean Water Fund.
 - i. WEC is not yet prepared to sign. There were concerns about the tone, achievability of the goals, and the ability of the state to afford to make these changes. Ideally, Towns would provide letters and guidance to the State of CT vs. signing a letter that was drafted by the Clean Water Fund. The WEC would like to consider writing our own letter that includes our Principles related to Clean Energy (e.g. We object to the raiding of the Clean Energy Fund), and we should share with the BOS before sending to the state.
 - **WEC members to send Principles directly to Debra (no cc: to other members).
 - ii. Peter – we should hold off on our website because the town is considering 1 consolidated website for all town committees and groups.
 - iii. Debra – Deb McFadden offered to be the mobilizing force to collect feedback and propose a town resolution to reject fracking waste being sent to CT from other states.

13. Adjournment at 9:27pm