

**Wilton Energy Commission**  
Meeting Minutes for October 16, 2008

**Attendance:**

*Commission Members Present:* Mike Lindberg, Rust Muirhead, Mitch Reichgut, Ron Cagenello, Bruce Hampson, Richard Creeth

*Absent:* Jim Furnivall, Ron French

*Also Present:* Hal Clark (Board of Selectmen), Patrice Gillespie (Conservation Commission), Malcolm Whyte (WEC advisor)

**Meeting:**

- Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Mike Lindberg
- Ron Cagenello moved to accept the minutes of September 25, 2008, seconded by Bruce Hampson. Motion passed 5 to 0 with Richard Creeth abstaining.
- Jim Snedeker informed the commission that due to increased professional demands on his time he will be resigning from the Wilton Energy Commission. Mike Lindberg thanked Jim for his help over the past year and asked commission members to submit the names of prospective replacement candidates to him as soon as possible.
- Rust Muirhead introduced Elizabeth DiSalvo of Trillium Architects. Elizabeth shared her thoughts on Green Architecture:
  - Number one priority is focusing on the “envelope” of a house
    - Start in the attic with a goal of R60 insulation.
    - Blow-in insulation is optimal
  - Houses built before 1980 generally can benefit significantly from an insulation upgrade
  - Photovoltaic payback: 10 years assuming 50% of electricity is offloaded in a 2,500 square foot house with 4 people.
  - Geothermal payback: 5 years **if** mechanicals are being replaced anyway.
  - Westport has adopted P&Z regulations that tie the size of the house to owner-supplied energy production systems.
- Conservation Committee Report- Rust Muirhead
  - The Clean Energy Community web site reports 176 signups (3.2% of households) in Wilton as of October 16th, the same as last month, indicating that they have not updated their web site.
  - Town Benchmarking Project (Bruce Hampson):
    - Public Schools
      - School Square Foot Data confirmed as accurate

- EPA Report reviewed with Gary Richards and Jim Furnivall on October 6. Both are enthused re: the value of the Report to manage and reduce energy use and to present a proactive stance to the community.
    - Looking forward to updating database with fiscal 2008 energy data.
      - Need to schedule visit by Institute intern.
  - Town Facilities
    - Will use Tax Assessor data for square foot values but won't re-run the analysis unless the variance is more than 10% of what we originally submitted.
    - Town (Sarah Taffel) will ask Fuel Oil supplier for missing data for DPW and Fire Dept plus the Police Dept to check accuracy of data input.
    - Will need the Institute for Sustainable Energy to rerun:
      - Town Hall (Correct square footage)
      - Fire Dept (Add Fuel Oil data )
      - DPW (Add Fuel Oil data )
      - Police Headquarters (Check energy data input)
- A call to the CT Siting Council re: natural gas availability was unsuccessful since they only deal with transmission not distribution. A call to Yankee Gas confirmed that the natural gas main line runs along Rte 7 from Norwalk and terminates at the intersection with Rte 33. The farthest fed customer is Orem's Diner. Any gas line extensions are analyzed based on customer requests, however most are considered not economically viable. The Gilbert & Bennett site will be getting natural gas from the Redding main line.
- Building Committee Report
  - WHS (Bruce Hampson)
    - Work on design and construction drawings continues and will be completed by mid-November
    - Economic scenario:
      - Bond market essentially frozen
      - Town will reassess Bonding situation in November.
        - Interim financing through short term Bond Anticipation notes.
        - Long term bond financing at project completion.
  - Comstock (Malcolm Whyte)
    - Economic Scenario:
      - BOS and Comstock Building Committee to meet November 3 to discuss future and options.
    - A& E Selection
      - Six Firms responded to RFQ.

- Committee will continue vetting process until decision is made re: project time table
  - Interim energy conservation measures
    - Building is currently 60% empty
    - No one should be allowed to use the vacant space
    - BOS should assess (via a professional) the cost and viability of sealing off unused space without disrupting the heating and other mechanical systems needed by the occupied space.
  
- Communications Report – Mitch Reichgut
  - Request has been made for a solar panel installation workshop at 9:00 at WHS.
  - Mitch provided materials/handouts gathered from the One Thing Expo in Hartford.
  - Three town contest: being designed around polling to gather information about conservation efforts that will have corresponding point awards.
  - Mitch to speak at Ogden House on 10/22 at 12:30.
  - After discussing the need for an Energy Conservation handout, it was agreed to purchase 400 pieces plus a half dozen “No Idle Zone” signs. Both handouts and signs will be used at the Hazardous Collection Day event on 10/25. Mike asked for volunteers for 2 hour shifts to hand out materials.
  - Bruce Hampson to talk to Gary Richards about re-using the signs at the schools.
  
- 2008 Review & 2009 Priorities
  - Hal Clark felt that there is a need for more subcommittees that represent (and would have as members) a broader range of Wilton constituencies. Hal also felt that there needed to be more women represented on the Commission.
  
  - There was general agreement that “Carbon Footprint” was not a very useful means of establishing goals and measuring performance.
  - The State, Stamford and Hamden Action Plans focus on reducing emissions, and include Energy Conservation as one important element. There was agreement that the Commission will focus next to develop a Wilton Plan.
  - The following outreach channels were identified:
    - Government needs to lead by example
    - Businesses need to recognize economic development benefits
    - Residents need to see a connection between conservation and improved property values and better quality of life.
  - Mike asked for feedback prior to the next meeting on how the Commission might re-organize itself in order to accomplish our objectives.

- Wilton Community Winterization Project
  - Kiwanis Club willing to help subsidize the cost of energy assessments for low income homes but as of today no one has expressed an interest in taking advantage of this.
  
- Next Meeting Scheduled for November 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Minutes submitted by Rust Muirhead