

Wilton Energy Commission  
Meeting Minutes for December 18, 2008

**Attendance:**

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

*Commission Members Absent:* Jim Furnivall, Ron French

*Also Present:* Shwetha Raghuraman, Jana Bertkau, Dale Hollingsworth (NXG Solar), Sean O' Connor (NXG Solar), and Patrice Gillespie (Wilton Conservation Commission)

**Meeting:**

- The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Chairman Mike Lindberg.
  
- Hal Clark moved to approve the minutes of November 10, 2008. Mitchell Reichgut seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.
  
- NXG Solar (Dale Hollingsworth and Sean O'Connor)  
Hal Clark introduced Dale and Sean from NXG Solar. Hal has developed an interest in NXG Solar because 1) There is a relatively quick payback time for the installation which requires no major engineering and which does not pierce a roof 2) The Wilton Library might benefit from this type of solar and 3) The town of Wilton owns about 10-11 acres of dormant land at the old town dump which would be suitable for such solar installation. Dale and Sean then presented a power point. Mike thanked them for their time. Mike and Hal will pursue the options of NXG Solar with the Wilton Library this week.
  
- Town/School Bench Marking Status (Bruce Hampson)
  - Final Town and School Benchmark reports received from the Institute for Sustainable Energy.
  - School Reports
    - Presented to the Board of Education on November 24.
    - The School Bench Mark "Score" +/- 50. Average energy use when compared against 10,000 +/- schools in the EPA US Data Base
    - Average CT Schools benchmarked by the Institute in 2005 is 26.
    - Wilton Schools significantly better, but room for improvement.
    - Schools plan to use the EPA Portfolio Manager Software as foundation of their Energy Management Program.
      - Bill Leahy, Director of the Institute will visit the School on January 8, 2009 to train staff on the use of the program and inspect some schools.
  
  - Town Reports:
    - Presented to Bill Brennan on December 5, 2009 [Mike Lindberg & Bruce Hampson]
    - Presented to Bill Brennan's Operations Team on December 11 [Bruce Hampson]

- Town buildings have very low scores and high energy usage, except for the Library which has a score of 60. Score of 75, earns recognition as an Energy Star Building.
- Bill has asked his team to target a 10% reduction in energy use next year.
- Town has been invited to training session on Jan 8. Awaiting reply.

A significant problem is that the insulation in Town Hall is very poor and employees run individual space heaters to keep warm. To correct this by insulating walls is a huge expense.

A simple improvement would be a cultural change among town employees that would bring at least a 10% cut. e.g. shutting off the AC at night, turning off lights and turning the thermostats

A discussion followed regarding how to get the town engaged in reducing energy usage in its buildings. The schools are very engaged largely because there is a school plant manager. The town has no such person.

Bill Brennan would like to see a 10% reduction over the next year. But there needs to be a person who owns this program. A presentation will be made to the Board of Selectman to encourage such a reduction.

The following recommendations could be brought to Bill Brennan and the Board of Selectman.

1. Each town building would keep track of utility bills.
2. Month- to- month and year-to-year results would be displayed in a public place.
3. Reducing energy usage would be included in annual performance objectives for all department heads.

Mike and the members of the WEC thanked Bruce for his comprehensive efforts in benchmarking.

▪ Green Cup Contest (Swetha Raghuraman, Mitchell Reichgut)

Shwetha distributed the questionnaire for the Green Cup Challenge. (see attached) It will be distributed to residents and businesses of Westport, Wilton and Weston and points will be scored for participation and for answers. A representative from C,L & P will score the questionnaires. The questionnaires need to be returned by January 31<sup>st</sup>. A ceremony to present the Green Cup to the winning town will be held.

▪ Update on CT Clean Energy Fund Award to Wilton (Mike Lindberg)

Mike met with Bob Wall who confirmed that the town of Wilton has 205 sign-ups and thus qualifies for a 4<sup>th</sup> kilowatt of solar. It will be installed above the science classroom and the green house at the high school in March. Ron French is donating 10KW.

▪ State Economic Stimulus Initiative- (Mike Lindberg)

Several suggestions were made for the town of Wilton to propose for green “shovel ready” projects including a bridge across the Norwalk River, the building of the senior community Wilton Commons and adding solar on the High School at 50kw for \$500,000. There was consensus among the members present to present two suggestions to the Board of Selectman. 1. Include a 50KW solar as part of the High School project and 2. Build a footbridge over the Norwalk River.

- Wilton Energy Plan

Bruce said that our plan should be consistent with Federal, State and other plans. We should partner with ICLEI. (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) Bruce then introduced Patrice Gillespie from the Wilton Conservation Commission to explain the Sierra Club Cool Cities Campaign. Patrice explained that the Cool Cities program has 1000 member cities, 500 in the United States and many from towns of fewer than 30,000 in population. Sixteen cities and towns in Connecticut are Cool Cities. These are cities that have made a commitment to stopping global warming by signing the W.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement. There is a 12-step program which is very workable, saves money and leads the way toward a safer and more secure energy future. An added bonus is that Cool Cities have access to available grants.

[Mitch Reichgut & Richard Creeth left the meeting at approximately 9:15]

Following the presentation a discussion was held about whether to a) join ICLEI and b) initiate their carbon emission benchmarking program. There was general agreement that it is worth joining ICLEI for access to the data and conservation planning materials. However, based on the experiences of Stamford and Westport there was a general consensus that it would not be an efficient use of resources to undertake the comprehensive benchmarking. Instead, we should use the ICLEI data to quantify the potential gains on specific projects identified by the commission. Bruce agreed to try and arrange an informational ICLEI webinar at the next meeting.

Hal Clark said that he was going through other town plans and identifying components that should be included in the Wilton plan. He will distribute the list as soon as it is completed.

- Next Meetings: January 22 and February 19
- Meeting was adjourned at 9:35.

Submitted by  
Jana Bertkau and Rust Muirhead