

Wilton Energy Commission  
Meeting Minutes for October 15, 2009  
Final-Approved

**Attendance**

Commission Members Present: Mike Lindberg, Bruce Hampson, Patrice Gillespie, Gail Lavielle, Richard Creeth, Dona Pratt, Ron Cagenello, Jim Lucey

Commission Members Absent: Hal Clark

Also Present: Jana Bertkau, Shwetha Raghuraman, Katie Jacobs, Becky Bunnell, Paula Byrdy

**Meeting**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Mike Lindberg called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

**2. Review of Minutes of September 2009**

There was a correction to the minutes. On page 1 section 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph. The sentence should read. *Patrice said that the town of Guildford is joining with two surrounding towns in applying for ARRA funds to hire an energy manager.* Bruce moved to pass the minutes. Ron seconded. It passed unanimously.

**3. Introduction of Paula Byrdy as a nominee for membership in the WEC**

Mike welcomed and introduced Paula and said that her nomination would be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen during their meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup>.

**4. Update on ARRA stimulus funding opportunities**

- **78K for municipal projects.** Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, \$9.6 M has been allocated to CT programs managed through the OPM Municipal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program. Wilton's proposed allocation is \$76,293. Grant application submission date is November 5, 2009. Following BOS approval, the WEC engaged the SBS consulting firm to evaluate seven municipal facilities including the Wilton Library. They documented a prioritized list of energy conservation projects consistent with OPM project guidelines. They identified project costs, savings, payback period and energy/carbon emission reductions. Consequently, Mike and Bruce, with the approval of the WEC, are recommending the following priorities for the November 5<sup>th</sup> application.

Wilton municipal facility energy efficiency retrofits:	\$30,644
Wilton school and municipal lighting retrofits	\$20,651
Contract six months of energy technical consulting services	<u>\$25,000</u>
Total	\$76,295

Mike and Bruce are finalizing the application and sending it to the state. They will ask the BOS on Monday to approve the allocation. Gail asked what the effective

result would be with a \$25,000 consultant. Jim asked if this person could be shared with a surrounding town. Donna asked what this person would be doing day to day. Mike responded that we have 23 town facilities and when you look at it there is no five year plan for maintenance, upkeep, capital funding etc. This person would develop a detailed profile of the energy projects that need to be done within the community. These have an appropriate payback period and these are what need to be prioritized. The schools are looking at the bills monthly and letting the principals know how their schools compare with other schools and other years. There needs to be end-user ownership of the process which a consultant could provide. This grant would be energy focused. There were about 100 other items listed in addition to those that are recommended for the grant. Mike proposed that CLP and other state programs would cover these. Richard commented that Wilton should be able to fund other energy improvements if they can be proven to be cost effective. Wilton should add a fund for future work that proves reduction in cost; he would like to propose this at Monday night's Board of Selectman's meeting. Bruce suggests a cut off of say 8% ROI and cost of funds is 4% ROI.

The final set of improvements includes human engineering items which clearly demonstrate the need for a facilities manager. e.g. In the library the boiler runs all year. Many of these items would benefit from an energy manager who would put in a procedure and process. We would like to take what has been done at the high school such as LED lights and move it to the municipal buildings. Some towns are taking a piece of this project and using it to subsidize the Home Energy Solution home energy audit program. More publicity about this program would be helpful. There was consensus that we have to be better with our objectives and if we take this step of hiring a consultant, we must ensure that the town embraces his recommendations.

- **\$1.4M for Regional Energy Reliability Projects**

Ron French developed a business case for solar, but the state has not shown any willingness to approve sustainable energy projects. As of today, not one of the 9 regional communities has taken any action to submit a proposal.

- **Norwalk River Valley Multi-Use Trail** Donna said that they are trying to meet next week or so with Dan Landau who has created the Norwalk portion of the trail. It would be desirable to team with Norwalk which is already designated as a priority community. We are cautiously optimistic to be part of this initiative. The South Western Regional Planning Agency's next meeting is meeting is October 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Norwalk Transit District. The public can comment from 8-8:30am on the Super 7 issue. It is important to fill the room. If you cannot come you can send an email to Toni Boucher. Mike encourages all to attend

## **5. Wilton High School HVAC and Wilton Fire Department Projects-Bruce Hampson**

The High School renovation deadlines were met in September and in October. The heat was turned on October 15<sup>th</sup>. By March we will have completed most of the contracts. A commissioning agent has been engaged who will spend four

seasons at the high school to insure that all systems function as designed. There is a time schedule for the Wilton Fire Department and later for Comstock. The hope is that Comstock will be zero energy building.

#### **6. Wilton High School Initiatives-Jim Lucey, Shwetha Raghuraman, Katie Jacobs**

Katie spoke with Mr. Durkee regarding putting electricity into golf carts at school and asked if the Ridgefield car retrofit package might be applicable to a golf cart. Patrice will look into this further. Shwetha reported on the competition idea. The topic could be the best idea for saving energy in the town of Wilton. A number of possible project areas were discussed. If we put up a prize, how many students will compete for the prize? Could it be a required project for the environmental science classes as well as open to any other student. There are 7 AP environmental science classes and 3 regular environmental science classes. Jim, Shwetha and Katie will come up with a more detailed proposal. It could be based on truly breakthrough innovation- feasible, reasonable, focused on Wilton community and residents and communities?

There is a woman called Carrie O'Neal in Norwalk who is the cofounder of Earthmarkets. Ms. O'Neal proposes that Wilton, Weston, Westport and Fairfield collaborate for money for a program to incentivize homeowners to improve home efficiency. CT has a good program for saleable carbon package which could be sold and would increase revenue for the town. Mike would like to invite Carrie to the next WEC to learn more about this. Jim Lucey could input this at the high school. A video could be produced at the high school. We have some good student ideas. Richard Creeth will work with Jim on this.

Dona suggested a blog section on the web site to increase interest in home energy audits.

#### **7. 2010 Wilton Green Discovery Day – Jana Bertkau**

Jana reported on initial meetings with the Wilton Library, Woodstock Nature Center, Ambler Farm and Wilton High School, represented by Jim Lucey. She also introduced Becky Bunnell who is an experienced marketer and business owner who is willing to contribute time and effort to this project. She reported that there was enthusiasm for an all town Green Discovery Day to be held on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The high school field house is available. Each group would focus on its particular targets such as sustainable farming at Ambler, discovering nature in your back yard at Woodcock, and reducing carbon footprint and promoting renewable energy at the field house. The field house would be the center for the WEC mission. The library would lend support to all areas and could provide films and space of speakers and panels. A green fair consultant had been identified who, at a very reasonable rate, could help line up vendors and speakers.

Several members of the commission felt that the event might be diluted if there were too many sites to visit in one day. It would be better to keep it centralized in the field house on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Perhaps this could be turned into an earth month celebration. Then each site could have its own day as part of a longer term program. The library could organize a couple of lectures on other days leading up to the high school vendor fair. Perhaps every group could come together with their displays for the big field house day. This might be called the Wilton's Green Discovery Festival.

Dona Waskom, Becky Bunnell, and Paula Byrde offered to work on a steering committee for this event. Mike offered to contact CLP about the \$4,000 grant from the CT Clean Energy Fund to be used for this project. The members approved the use of the consultant and agreed that planning should continue.

#### **8. Wilton Energy Plan- key first phase priorities**

Mike distributed a Wilton Energy Plan 2010 Priorities document (see attached) In attempting to identify those project areas that we might want to focus on during the next twelve months, Mike began by highlighting in yellow those areas where we are actively engaged. He was pleasantly surprised to see the breadth of the topic areas currently covered.

Next, given current federal, state and local funding programs and current focus across the community, he tried to identify those likely priority areas and highlighted them in red text. Again, we appear to have the majority of these key focus areas engaged at this time. This approach identified two areas: Low Emission Vehicles and Clean School Buses that we may want to incorporate into our current discussions. These two are very topical given the upcoming town budget process and the federal/state funding that has been available for the school bus emission retrofits.

Mike would very much appreciate everyone's thoughts and recommendations re key priorities for the next twelve months. He would recommend that when we complete discussions on a given topic, as Bruce has led on LEED standards and recommissioning, that we document our recommendations and incorporate into a formal energy plan that we create over the next twelve to eighteen months.

Bruce said that an element of the LEED standards for new construction and for recommissioning should be considered together. Does public policy influence all levels and how? Patrice commented that technology advances so quickly that the document would be immediately out of date. We would need to include some language to accommodate this.

Bruce would like to put a 1 year, 5 year and longer document together and bring this to the BOS. Dona says that the schools do this. That planning process builds the budget. Each school has a long range plan. Then you get the buy in, as further publicity brings some projects to fruition. Dona says that for long term projects, the Board of Education has a chart which keeps the projects on the drawing board for yearly reconsideration. Mike reminded the team that the BOS says that they would prefer to review individual sections of a plan as opposed to

a detailed end-to-end document. We have four or five items that we can bring to the BOS. As we finish these we give it to them item by item. The Board can absorb several topics at each quarter. There was consensus to follow Mike's outline.

**9. Publication of biweekly conservation and sustainability articles in local Papers.**

Richard Creeth offered to draft an article on the home energy audit program and Patrice offered to help.

**10. Other new business**

CT has received \$4 million for a solar incentive program.

**11. Future meeting schedule**

The next meeting will be Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> from 7-9:30pm in the library.

**12. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38pm.

Submitted by,

Jana Bertkau