

Approved at 7/18 Meeting.

DRAFT minutes - Lyme Energy Committee meeting, March 21, 2016

Present: Jay Smith (in for Sue), Matt Brown, Mark Bolinger, Robin Taylor, Mike Novello

Absent: Scott Nichols, Sue MacKenzie, Dan O'Hara, Joanna Jaspersohn, Stephen Doig

Mark called the meeting to order at 7:30.

1. The minutes of our September 28, 2015 meeting were approved as circulated. Action: Mark to send to town
2. Matt reported on the research that he has done regarding zoning best practices for ground-mounted PV systems. This included a conversation with Dori Wolfe (a solar consultant who has been involved with a number of the larger PV projects in VT), as well as printing/reading a planning "best practices" guide published by the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission, which contains some good information. Action: Matt, Mark, others will continue to think about the issues, pursue leads, and formulate concepts to bring before the Planning Board. We will discuss this again at our next meeting.
3. Lyme resident Rich Brown spoke before the Committee about possible changes to the zoning ordinance that could encourage energy-efficient new construction. Examples include: (A) enable multiple dwellings to be joined and share interior walls, to reduce the number of exterior walls and thereby reduce heat loss; (B) measure building footprint (for lot coverage purposes) based on interior floor space rather than exterior dimensions, so as not to discourage super-insulated (i.e., thick) walls; (C) encourage development closer to town, to reduce the amount of driving and wear and tear on the roads. The possibility of shared heating systems was also raised. We discussed the role of the Committee and its lack of authority on zoning issues, but agreed to think about whether it would be appropriate to provide a list of recommendations to the zoning board that the Committee could support. Action – Continue to think about this, and discuss at next meeting.
4. Now that the 30% federal investment tax credit for solar has been extended for a few more years and net metering seems to have been granted a reprieve in NH, we revisited the idea of installing a PV system on the town office building, and/or expanding the PV system on the Lyme School roof. Because the town cannot make use of tax credits, we had previously discussed the possibility of a "third-party-owned" arrangement whereby a local business would own the system for 6 to 7 years, during which it would sell the solar electricity to the town at a similar rate to what the town pays Eversource. At the end of 6 or 7 years, the town would buy the system at a greatly reduced cost and enjoy "free" electricity thereafter. Mike reported that the potential third-party owner that he had previously had in mind is no longer interested. And the general feeling around the table was that raising money from the town for this would be a hard sell at present, given all the other current and likely future budget issues. So we decided to table this once again, pending identification of another willing third-party owner. Action – nothing immediate, but keep thinking about this.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35. Next meeting is Monday, May 16 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Bolinger (filling in for Dan O'Hara)

