

Minutes: Lyme Energy Committee Meeting - October 8, 2018

Guests: Judi Colla, Yolanda Baumgartner from Sustainable Hanover Energy Subcommittee

Members: Mark Bolinger, Scott Nichols, Jim Nourse, Mike Novello, Dan O'Hara, Kevin Sahr

1. Judi Colla (Chair, Executive Committee, Sierra Club Upper Valley Group; member, Sustainable Hanover) and Yolanda Baumgartner (Co-Chair Sustainable Hanover, *Ready for 100*) discussed the process by which Hanover embraced the Ready for 100 initiative, including the passing of the warrant at the May 17 town meeting. Highlights include:
 - (a) The Sierra Club UVG initially became interested in blocking proposals to bring liquefied natural gas into Lebanon. This work led to an interest in promoting a positive approach to realizing a fossil-free future. A proposal was submitted and approved to join the national Sierra Club for Ready for 100 campaign. The goal is to provide 100% of the electricity for the town by 2030, and 100% of the heat and transportation energy through renewable sources by 2050.

The group also received some funding from NextGen America to hire a community organizer, Ally Samuel. As a next they reached out to partner with Sustainable Hanover, Julia Griffin, Town Manager, and Dartmouth College (which consumes 50+% of energy in Hanover).

- (b) After building a coalition of the six largest consumers of electricity in Hanover to commit to unbundled RECs (renewable energy certificates) and creating a buying group of 300 small businesses and residents to purchase through a bundled REC system, Sustainable Hanover was looking for a more comprehensive energy plan. They investigated the NetZero Action Plan adopted by Cambridge, MA, but found the amount of data to be collected and analyzed not appropriate for Hanover. They were excited about joining the Ready for 100 initiative, and felt that its focus on being aspirational and inspirational a good fit.

National surveys conclude that while more than 60% of Americans believe climate change is real; they also identify a lack of political buy-in as the biggest obstacle to a solution. Ready for 100 attempts to start by galvanizing a community's political will, thereby unleashing its citizens' energies and expertise.

- (c) The lead-up to the town vote included a planning matrix (a result of a training provided by national Sierra Club), neighborhood meetings, reading groups, tabling at local farmers' markets, and the use of social media. Committee members stressed to residents that the warrant article was not binding for any one individual, and that the town would continue making sound financial choices in the pursuit of these goals. The town meeting to vote on the warrant drew twice the usual number of residents and passed unanimously.

(d) Currently, 84 towns or cities, two states and several counties across America have pledged to meet the Ready for 100 goals.

2. Energy Committee members then asked questions about the process, next steps and possible partnerships with other communities in the Upper Valley.

(a) Next steps for Hanover include: the writing of a vision statement; holding a town forum to report on completed steps; renewed collaboration with Dartmouth College and the other major energy consumers in town, including the creation of a VPPA (Virtual Power Purchasing Agreement); promotion of residential solar; rewording of the “permissive” zoning ordinances to allow for renewable energies; a resource network for homeowners; contracting with a Tuck School First-Year group to analyze/recommend the best site on town land for a community solar array and drawing up a financial cost/benefit analysis; a Ready for 100 November workshops for state municipal officers and energy committee members who have committed to Ready for 100 (including Hanover, Concord, Plainfield-Cornish; Keene is working towards that commitment); a commitment to renovate senior housing to achieve net zero for energy consumption; a written all-sector energy road map for Hanover to reach its goals by Mark Jacobsen (Stanford University);

Sustainable Hanover has contracted with 3Degrees, an energy consultant, who has put together a specific plan for ways in which the town can achieve its renewable energy goals. The consultant fee was included in the town budget.

Very fortunate that Julia Griffin, Hanover’s Town Manager, is so supportive. The timing was fortuitous as Dartmouth College was simultaneously undergoing its own internal review of energy use and Sustainable Hanover was able to apply some pressure for the College to adopt its goals.

3. Sustainable Hanover will share their materials with us, i.e. slides from 3Degrees, vision statement, Tuck Report on community solar sighting and financing, planning matrix, etc.

4. Lyme Energy Committee reactions to the Ready for 100 initiatives:

(a) Support for the idea of “planting the flag in the distance”; setting an aspirational goal.

(b) General agreement that the majority of Lyme residents would support the goal, but that much more detail of how the town and its residents would achieve the goal would need to be provided to get significant buy-in.

(c) If the town moves forward with this, it must pay attention to the social justice aspects of energy consumption. Even though there is an “opt-in” reality to these improvements, the fact remains that many of the renewable systems are expensive and there are many town residents who already struggle to pay for their energy. We must look into federal, state and county funds to help this sector. This may even need to be a primary step in order to galvanize even the group of residents who can afford these systems.

- (d) It makes sense to attack the low-hanging fruit of electricity as the technology is here. Heat and transportation, especially in a residential community like Lyme, will prove much more difficult to move to renewables; the longer goal date (2050) allows for the hope that new technologies will be developed that focus on these two sectors.
- (e) Given our success with Solarize and Weatherize Upper Valley, we should continue these efforts and use the momentum to expand.
- (f) The Committee has been charged with rewriting the Energy section of the Town Master Plan. This provides us with an opportunity to set the stage for achieving a vision of a fossil-free energy future for Lyme. We might envision a parallel push between our master plan and a Ready for 100 commitment.

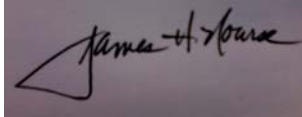
5. Discussion of Swan Grants, Lyme Foundation

- (a) Mark has sent proposal ideas to Peter Glenshaw for the following:
 - (i) Pre-Pay the Town Office Solar Loan
 - (ii) Put Solar PV on the Library Roof
 - (iii) Help Install an Electric Vehicle Charging Station
 - (iv) Upgrade Lyme's Street Lights
 - (v) Pledging and Planning for 100% Renewable Energy
 - (vi) Reviving the "Weatherize Lyme" program specifically for lower-income residents
 - (vii) "Community solar" for all Lyme residents, with a subsidized offering for lower-income residents
 - (viii) Electric bus transportation for the Lyme School and the greater community

6. Jim will set up a Google Doc to share information with the committee.

7. Next Meeting: Monday, November 12, 2018; 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Nourse", is written over a dark, rectangular background.

Jim Nourse