

## **DORSET ENERGY COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of Meeting 2/5/13**

Present: Jim Hand, Rob Gaiotti, Tyler Yandow, Jim Salsgiver

**VERMONT HOME ENERGY CHALLENGE:** Jim Hand has signed Dorset up for the Vermont Home Energy Challenge. Manchester has also signed up, as well as Transitions Town Manchester. Jim Hand reported that, at last night's Meeting of the Perfect House Committee, Maura Campbell, Community Initiatives Manager for NeighborWorks of Western Vermont, joined the meeting to report on her new position with Neighborworks, which includes acting as Coordinator for the Vermont Home Energy Challenge in our area (apparently Bennington & Rutland Counties). There are 6 regions in the State for the Challenge. Jim suggested that we ask Maura to act as a coordinator for all the groups in our area who are involved with the Energy Challenge, to make the best use of resources, avoid duplicative work & efforts and try to use Maura to help keep the efforts of our local groups organized.

**RESIDENTIAL BUILDING ENERGY STANDARDS:** Ellen Maloney, Jim Salsgiver, and Tyler Yandow were all at the Select Board Meeting on January 15<sup>th</sup> to support the idea of adjusting the fee structure of building permits to provide funding to cover several site visits to inspect compliance with RBES. (This is in recognition of the obligation of the State to implement some form of compliance – and our belief that this approach could cover any obligation on the part of the Town to support the State's obligation.) The Planning Commission had improved upon language suggested by the Zoning Administrator and the Energy Committee to cover this change, and provided that to the Select Board, with the PC's recommendation to make this change. The Select Board was receptive, and plans to take this idea up further at their next meeting (to be held 2/19/13).

**ENERGY REPORT AND ASSESSMENT:** Last week (1/29/13), Jim Sullivan provided his latest draft of the Dorset Energy Report and Assessment he has been working on. He will attend the Planning Commission Meeting tonight to discuss the Energy Report, as well as to provide an update of BCRC activities, including the Build-Out Study. Copies of the Report and Assessment will be made available to the Members of the Planning Commission, and this document should be useful in the process of updating the Town Plan in the next year. We will try to have DEC Members at the Planning Commission Meeting to show our support for the Report and Assessment, and to answer any questions.

**PARK & RIDE:** The Committee discussed the positive response received from the State with respect to the suggested project of improving the Park & Ride near the intersection of Rt. 7 and Rt. 11/30. This effort has been led by Ellen Maloney and Mark Anders at the BCRC. It was also noted that the State has issued a report noting the likely shortfalls for Transportation funding for Vermont in the coming years – and will be looking for input on the Reports ideas for how to close a substantial spending/funding gap in the coming years.

**PACE – Efficiency Vermont** sent out a PACE Update email last Friday which noted that they are still working toward being able to set a first PACE Subscription Period, but are not yet in a position to determine when that might be. Jim Salsgiver reported that he sent a note (following receipt of the email) to the folks working on this at EV, to seek any further details on the status of the financing facility (the delaying factor), and to offer any assistance we might be able to provide. The Committee also discussed a possible issue that may arise once PACE does get up & running. Jim Salsgiver had previously

suggested to EV (most recently in October 2012) that the up-front fees associated with PACE loans could be a barrier to people using the program. Fees are expected to be \$350 for a PACE loan. This, combined with the up-front cost of an Energy Audit, could be too large of an out-of-pocket amount for many folks to handle – which could adversely impact the effectiveness of PACE. It had been suggested that EV try to incorporate some sort of pre-underwriting (which the EV PACE website should make possible), to allow applicants to avoid the up-front cash outflow of the \$350 PACE fees. Jim Hand suggested that Jim Salsgiver write up a note on this issue which we could use to better highlight this issue to EV and to other interested parties (like our Legislators, particularly Bob Hartwell, considering his Committee position). Jim Hand also noted that EV has apparently now instituted a \$100 incentive that can be used toward a residential Energy Audit.

BROOK VALLEY “ENERGY FAIR”: Beth Meachem, in conjunction with Brook Valley appliance, is looking to have some sort of energy fair on March 21<sup>st</sup> at the Brook Valley store. She has invited the Perfect House Committee and local energy committees to come and have informational booths to present what things they have going on in their towns. The Perfect House Committee intends to be there. Jim Salsgiver will pull out the DEC’s presentation board to update it, and we may want to use that as a side item to the Perfect House presentation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Salsgiver