

Mason Energy Commission March 1, 2021

Attendees: Michele Siegmann, Richard Stockdale, Dave Morrison, Joe Harney, Darrell Scott, Kathy Chapman, Curt Spacht, Mike McGuire, Garth Fletcher, Liz Fletcher, and Michelle Scott

Right to know statement reviewed, all meeting attendees acknowledged.

February minutes approval postponed due to glitch in the email so people hadn't had time review the agenda or to read minutes. We will review the February minutes, at next meeting.

Solar possibility for Hwy Barn

Solar proposal has questions: Curt feels that this slide proposal needs the support of information from other towns who have successfully added solar which is saving their town's money.

Concern: that the barn is not quite angled perfectly for solar. One suggestion to make the highway barn even more efficient would be to add a sort of porch that would be more south facing. Could be used for cover for the trucks. This was discussed, and tabled temporarily due to added expense.

Concern: The solar panels are micro inverters which convert to AC. Joe feels that 50% of energy is lost if you convert it back and forth. He feels we could use a microinverter at the end of the line, to keep from going back and forth. This resulted in a technical discussion which left the secretary a bit foggy. Later information showed this not to be a concern. Garth will send some clarifying electrical information to all of us.

Darrell and Dave will check to see what the power draws are at the Highway Dept. to check on electricity use, using the meter at the library.

Non technical Concerns

Pro: Being able to charge vehicles at the Hwy Barn would be a plus if we could incorporate that our plan, nixed since power company won't agree to more panels than are currently needed.

Some committee members want to do solar panel project for its own sake, especially since this one would actually not cost the Town, and would generate some income. Due to current evidence, fossil fuel is being phased out as solar and wind become more efficient, and are cheaper with fewer environmental costs. Evidence of this is fossil fuel companies' current investment policies.

Con: Currently MEC does not have someone who could be the project manager and champion for doing this project. No one on the committee has the energy to take this on at this time. It doesn't seem to show enough savings, even if we use the quicker payback loan, to convince the Town. We will look into getting a free energy audit for the Hwy Barn. A discussion ensued around the next possible building in town to add solar to, and the ones suitable are the Mann House, and the Police station.

Most members seem to feel that continued attention of the MEC is merited as this is a way to make the Town more resilient to energy changes of the future, and it sets an example for townspeople that changes are coming.

We have nominated Joe and Michele Siegmann for presenting to the BOS on the 23rd of March.

Michele moves to end the meeting, Liz seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Michelle Scott, Kathy Chapman, Liz Fletcher, Dave Morrison, Michelle Scott

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

For more information: Below are some sites that discuss solar in municipalities in NH in addition to the slides that Michael from Shelburne created for our project.

Info: <https://www.nhbr.com/nhdes-and-some-towns-pave-way-for-large-scale-solar/>

<https://warner.nh.us/solar/>

<https://www.nhmunicipal.org/town-city-article/what-every-new-hampshire-town-city-needs-know-about-solar-energy-today>

<http://www.greenenergytimes.org/2019/05/15/new-hampshire-solar-newfields-municipal-solar-and-milford-solar-farm/>

Upcoming Events and links

| Date/ Time | Title | Link to register or for more info |
|------------------|---|---|
| 4th Wednesday | RF100 orientation webinar | https://docs.google.com/document/d/16EDrgUVWD21m32S7XNxlHvKxGW2M2ctaZldHK |
| | New Hampshire Communities for Climate Solutions | https://sites.google.com/view/carbon-cashback-coalition/ |

From Kathy:

Wed, Mar 3, 1:44 AM (1 day ago)

1. Investigate having an energy audit done for the highway barn -- any volunteers for this task?
2. In the meantime, get the meter from the library and test a few possible energy sinks in the highway barn -- Darrell and Dave
3. Check on street light upgrade possibilities -- Darrell
4. Consider the following pro/con list below. In your estimation, do the cons outweigh the pros for the highway barn solar project? for the police department solar project? -- all. Please reply all with your thoughts so that we can pivot quickly at the next meeting, or move on to work on another area (not solar panels), also please make your comments before the 3/23 BOS meeting
5. Prepare a briefing for the BOS -- Joe and Michele and anyone they want to help them -- please throw out whatever you have before the 3/23 meeting and the group can review. As a refresher, the briefing is not to convince the BOS of approving our project because we don't know at this moment we will even choose this project to work on. The briefing is to keep the BOS informed of what we're working on.
6. Attend the BOS meeting on 3/23 to support Joe and Michele

cons:

no/weak champion

precludes other stuff

electricity isn't our biggest energy consumption in town

costs of panels etc might go down in the future

not very showy, not in the center of town

if we had more EVs, it might make more sense

might be a cheaper way to take care of town surcharges w/ energy efficiency

technical concerns:

90 degrees off, still snow on roof,

trees, close to property line, maybe could thin out, maybe bruce mann will help thin but Mann likes buffer

sloped carport roof on south side? would have to give different #s to micheal @ different model results -- would cost more money

pros:

set a good example of what can be done

path to Evs -- but do we need more panels for that path?

charging station for the town @ police department?

making ourselves resilient

if we chose an investment model, we could possibly take advantage of tax credits for solar which appear to be going away in 2 years--

Kathy Chapman, Esq.

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