

Newton Citizen's Commission on Energy

Minutes of Meeting of Monday, November 15, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Room, Public Buildings Department, 52 Elliot Street, Newton Highlands, MA 02461-1605

Present: Eric Olson (Chair), Halina Brown (Vice-Chair), David Tannozzini (Newton Energy Officer), John Bliss, Fred Brustman, Jonathan Kantar, Lawrence Kaufman, Ira Krepchin, **Others present:** Ed Craddock – Mayor's Advisory Committee on Renewable Resources, Steve Barry - Chair Green Decade Energy Committee

Chair Eric Olson called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

- 1) **Review of draft October 18, 2010 meeting minutes:** The minutes were accepted with a change to the Chestnut Hill Square item 5 to delete the last sentence relating to S.P.A. There were a few changes in wording and punctuation and three acronyms, HPBC, ESCO, and PACE, were spelled out where they first occurred. The minutes were accepted as amended. (7:59 p.m.)
- 2) **Other Items for the Agenda:** None were suggested.

The chair asked for introduction for Ed Craddock and Steve Barry. Ed is a member of the Mayor's Committee on Renewable Resources (RRC). This evening he brought his Zapcar Zebra, an all-electric vehicle made in China that gets 40-60 miles per charge. He noted that the purchase price is about \$10,000 or about one-third of the price of a Nissan Leaf electric vehicle. (8:03 p.m.)

New Business to be Discussed

- 3) **Street Lighting:** Ira Krepchin reviewed the cost of the conversion of streetlights in 2007 as \$1.4 million, which was paid back in about two years due to annual savings of \$600-700,000. Steve Barry reported that the Green Decade Energy Committee was looking for an appropriate new initiative for energy savings and suggested that further savings in street light operation might be had from limiting the hours of operation, reducing the intensity of the lights, and/or replacing the high-pressure sodium vapor (HPS) lamps with light-emitting diode (LED) lamps. He further reported that more than fifty communities nationally, including eight to ten in Massachusetts, had made such changes in recent years.

There are several approaches to changing streetlight operation, including reducing the hours, typically in the early morning, and dimming the lights, also typically in the early morning. Centralized control technology would be required, including the use of cell phone technology in each lamp fixture, which would both control the lamp and report problems with the lamp and fixture. HPS lamps would require expensive ballast and light spectrum changes. LED lamps would have a relatively long payback period. Expected savings in carbon emissions could range from thirty to seventy percent with LED lamps depending upon the status of a current installation.

Ira Krepchin recommended that the Commission study the alternatives. The costs would include \$70-100 per lamp and the same additional amount per lamp for a timer and control system. Eric Olson asked if it would be worthwhile to contact George Woodbury, who advised Newton on the conversion to HPS lamps and who has advised a number of other Eastern Massachusetts communities on light energy issues. Jon Kantar suggested that Ann Arbor, Michigan may have some documentation of their decision-making process and relative costs. Steve Barry offered to improve the cost estimates and to work with David Tannozzini on

discussing the issue with George Woodbury with the possibility of inviting him to our next meeting. (8:35 p.m.)

- 4) **Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Loan Advisory:** Further activity for PACE loans will be on hold until problems are resolved with the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA).

Unfinished Business to be Discussed

- 5) **Chestnut Hill Square:** In retrospect, the letter from the Commission to the Mayor was judged to have been too general and did not suggest specific recommendations for the New England Development project. A proposal for a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) category qualification might have been more effective. It was also noted that the development could be subjected to a more stringent stretch code (an enhanced building code being developed by the state) in 2012, which is only thirteen months away.

Jon Kantar noted that he had written a letter to the Board of Aldermen and to New England Development (NED). He further observed that he was favorably impressed by NED's transportation analysis and that the City's peer review consultant agreed. In any case, the proposal will be reviewed at the state level. He noted further that the pedestrian walkways at the intersection of Hammond Pond Parkway and Route 9 would be improved. Also, any unrestricted vehicle access from Florence Street will be delayed for five years to see if there are any problems with the Route 9 access. November 23 was set for the next meeting of the Land Use committee of the Board of Aldermen. (8:55 p.m.)

- 6) **Esco Energy Services Project** (BOA docket #5809 9EC0308):

Phase 1 – The contractor will have to prove that energy use has been reduced at Day Middle School by twenty-two percent, for the calendar year beginning on January 2011.

Phase 2 – Energy savings enhancements have triggered the delivery to the City of a check for \$128,000 from NSTAR. It will be harder to calculate building envelope savings without the development of a model. It was noted that in separate work the City is planning to replace roofs on six schools, which is also expected to reduce energy usage in those buildings.

Phase 3 – Jon Kantar met with Mark Mullins of Noresco to develop a protocol for subsequent audits. Noresco agreed to respond but has not done so yet. Their building envelope consultant has indicated that he is not interested in further work on the project.

- 7) **Newton's 2010 Energy Action Plan/Energy and Emissions Update:** There has been no response from NSTAR to our request of address level data on energy use.
- 8) **Transition of Renewable Resources Committee (RRC) to a Permanent Committee of the Commission:** It has been proposed that the committee be made a permanent committee of the Commission and that its members be appointed associate commissioners. David Tannozzini and Lawrence Kaufman will circulate proposed by-laws changes.
- 9) **Solar Power Purchase Agreement RFQ for Rumford Landfill and Other Properties:** A meeting was held on November 9, 2010 with the City and six companies represented by thirty people. Rose Durham, the City's chief procurement officer, led the meeting. The City accepted questions and will respond to them by November 19, 2010. There is an evaluation committee consisting of three City staff and two members of the RRC.

The prospective bidders are being asked to propose a twenty-year lease with the City for which they compete with the lowest price for power to City. Various deductions may also be proposed. NSTAR would provide free transmission of the power to City Hall. Vendors could also propose access to other buildings, e.g. the high schools. Various incentives should reduce the charge for power to the City even with today's relatively low energy prices.

10) NSTAR Community Outreach Grant Request: The Newton EcoTeams project, managed by Jay Walter and Bonnie Glickman of Green Decade who presented to the Commission at its September 20, 2010 meeting, was awarded a grant. Other Eastern Mass. communities who were awarded grants were Waltham, Winchester, and Lincoln.

David Tannozzini passed out a set of photographs of attic insulation installations that illustrated unwanted airflow and the use of a vapor barrier on the attic floor to block the airflow.

No further items were taken up for discussion, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, John Bliss, December 19, 2010