

Gloucester Clean Energy Commission Meeting Minutes: February 28, 2012

Present: Tom Balf, Linda Brayton, Candace Wheeler, John Rockwell, and guests

Mary Lou Mariaganis (founder, Gloucester Dog Park), Joe George (energy entrepreneur) and Ben Wildrick, interested citizen who would like to work on energy issues.

Minutes: Minutes approval will be postponed to next meeting. In the future John Rockwell will post all approved minutes on the City website, so whoever takes the minutes should send the finalized, approved set to John.

Gloucester Dog Park: Mary Lou Mariaganis is following up on Bob Hasting's efforts to get "green energy" lighting for the dog park. Mary Lou explained that the park will be improved and then given to the City, but there aren't sufficient funds for lighting, which would be needed about 4 hours per day four after-work hours during the darker months of the year. Lighting for the nearby basketball courts would also be good.

Mary Lou heard from Councilor Joe Ciolino that unspent Green Communities funding might be available to use on energy efficient lighting at this location. John Rockwell explained that the Green Communities application had cited **specific projects, so those funds are earmarked for the O'Maley School and rink.** Also, the addition of new street lights in the dog park might not count toward the Green Communities commitment to reduce energy usage by 20% over 5 years. **Tom added that the O'Maley projects were chosen because they would yield a good energy savings return on investment, and the dog park lighting projects wouldn't fit that criterion.**

Joe George pointed out that using renewables would mitigate the cost of running the street lights, and that energy from solar or wind generation could be stored in lithium batteries. He knew of a type of street light that includes solar power source, storage and light fixture all in one pole, and estimated that 10-12 of those would cost about \$80K. There would not be any net metering for solar energy produced in summer when the lighting would not be needed. He suggested that the dog park lighting could possibly fit into a larger city project for street light conversion to energy efficient technology. Tom Balf observed that \$80K is a lot of **money, and the City might get more "bang" out of a solar system on a school roof** for the same price tag. A small wind turbine might be an alternative for the dog park.

Green Communities Projects: John Rockwell reported that he met with Jim Hafey on Feb. 27 about the status of the Green Communities (GC) projects. Jim said that the line items in the grant application are "moving targets", as they fall within larger projects already underway using the City's money. Jim will identify what items will be left to do with Green Communities funds, and narrow the list

down. He will soon be drawing on the 50% of the GC funds that have already been remitted to the City.

Ameresco: John Rockwell said that on Friday, there would be another meeting with Ameresco, attended by key City officials (Jim Duggan, Jeff Towner, Mike Hale, Jim Hafey) to focus in on the question of whether/when to proceed with an ESCO project. Street light acquisition and conversion could be rolled into this project. The results of this meeting can be discussed at the next CEC meeting. Ameresco could also help us track energy consumption for purposes of documenting our GC 20% energy reduction. Tom noted that not all City buildings will be part of the investment grade audit done for an ESCO, so some tracking by City officials may still be needed. John R. said he would be learning the Mass Energy Insight tracking software, and could supplement anything done by the ESCO as needed.

Joe George pointed out that the City should be careful not to choose energy conservation solutions that corner the City into perpetuating the use of gas/oil energy (rather than renewables).

Outreach: Jill B. could not be here tonight, but will put some information in the CEC blog about the CATA solar panel project, which John Rockwell has looked into. **Linda Brayton had heard from the Mayor's Secretary, Chris Pantano, that she would provide information about the CEC website/blog to all City staff and Commissions.**

Ben Wildrick, who attended the CEC meeting as a concerned citizen of Gloucester, said he would like to get involved in working on energy issues on a volunteer basis, and could assist the CEC with outreach and education.

Energy Retrofits: John R. reported that he would be attending a Building Energy conference in Boston, and hoped it would be a good source of information on deep energy retrofits technology and funding sources. One funding concept is property assessed clean energy (PACE), through which a municipality would pay for energy efficiency retrofits for local residences and businesses, who would repay the cost of the retrofits through their property taxes. (This is similar to a "betterment"). **Linda Brayton will look for a webinar reference on this topic.**

[NOTE: Following the Feb. 28 meeting, Linda B. sent all CEC members the link to a webinar on PACE, and John Moskal advised the CEC that the PACE approach had been squelched by the Treasury/Comptroller of Currency, due to objections from the mortgage industry at having their loans subordinated to these energy projects. There is some flexibility still for commercial projects, but not much.]

Respectfully Submitted,

Candace Wheeler

