

Colrain Energy Committee Meeting Notes, 1/17/19 , Meeting # 20

Revised 1/21/19

Present: Peter Brooks, Elizabeth Ericson, Lynn DiTulio, Therese Fitzsimmons, Bing Waldsmith

Agenda: Application for Green Community funding

20-1 The minutes of the last meeting 1/03/19 were accepted.

20-2 Grant Application; The Town has received a letter from DOER announcing our designation as a Green Community. We need to submit an application to receive our grant. At least one item should be submitted by February 9th.

20-3 Application Guidelines, We have met with Jim Barry of DOER regarding how to complete and submit the application.

- Our 5 year energy conservation plan identified the Highway Garage back wall insulation as the most cost effective measure so we decided that would be the first item in our application.
- We want to include a solar project in the application but we may not be clear on where it will be in time for the submission in early February.
- We also want to save some the grant money to help home owners pay for MassSave energy upgrades. We may not have that figured out before all the money is spent.
- Elizabeth has submitted a preliminary application to Jim Barry for his review.

20-4 Solar Intallation; The select Board has made it clear that there will be no solar on the school roof. There are 2 spots on the school site to erect a “pavillion” that could be used as an outdoor classroom with solar panels as a roof. Some could be mounted over the cafeteria windows as a sun shade. The “Pavilion” structure may be prohibitively expensive, but we will continue discussions with the school.

- After our meeting with Jim Barry he emailed us about a problem with the size of an array permitted by the utilities and the problem of the utility buying the power at the retail rate. These are issues which the State will need to rectify but we may have to install 2 smaller systems to maximize the value of the energy produced.
- Other places to possibly install panels include the capped landfill near the Transfer Station, and on the roof over the compactor at the Transfer Station. The roof of the new Highway Garage is also a possibility.

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- We have a meeting scheduled with the School Building group at Mohawk High School at 5 PM on Jan. 28th. The meeting is to discuss either the Pavilion locations or the sunshade at Colrain Central School.

20-5 Metering; Installing panels on any Town owned building (other than the school) would be the simplest solutions for metering (i.e. “behind the meter” type of installation). The utility would simply replace the existing meter with a net-meter.

If installed at the school a new meter would be needed which would only record current going out to the grid.

Any new solar installation can’t exceed 10kW without falling into the “worm hole” referred to by Jim Barry, that would also result in lower financial value to the Town.

20-6 Solar Proposal; We will need an estimate from an installer to include in our grant application. After it is approved and the Town has received funding the Town will go through the public procurement process.

To Do List,

- Meet with School Building group Mowhawk HS, Superintendent’s Conference room (near cafeteria) at 5 PM, 1/28/19.
- What size solar array requires 3 phase power?.....Lynn?
- Solar proposal from an installer once we narrow the field.
- Prepare spreadsheet and naratives along with back-up data for application.
- Mark to sign the certification.
- Submit the completed application, hopefully in early February!

Next Meeting; Thursday February 21, at the Highway Garage at 6-8 pm.

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