

St. Johnsbury Town Energy Committee

September 6, 2022

Members Present:, Steve Isham, Pam Parker (Chair), Lynn Wurzburg, David Zajko, Elmore Dickstein

Guests: Susan Mayhew Ferguson, Robert Michael,

1. Introductions

The Committee and Guests introduced themselves.

2. Minutes

The minutes from the August meeting were reviewed and accepted.

3. Proposed Mayhew Solar Array

Susan Mayhew Ferguson talked to the committee about the land in St. Johnsbury Center that she and her siblings inherited from their father. It is a parcel of land that they refer to as the "lower field" because it sits lower than the rest of their land.

After inheriting the lands, the children decided that wanted to use the land to produce solar energy. They think that the land is perfect for a commercial solar array because it will sit in a depression and not be very visible. There would be wooded areas between the array and neighbors. And it is close to the St. Johnsbury School's solar array and would be easy to connect. One neighbor who lives on adjacent property supports the solar array, while another neighbor, who owns adjacent property, but does not live on it, does object.

They did not want to lease the land out to a solar company because they did not want to tie their children to the lease. They decided to sell the land to Norwich Solar, who will only buy the land if they obtain preferred siting.

Susan has asked to attend the September 20 Planning Commission meeting to explain to them why the owners want to use their property for solar. She has offered to show the property to the Planning Commission and Energy Committee on the 20th.

4. Button Up Fall Events

The Old Stone House in Brownington will host a weatherization event that is similar to the one the committee co-hosted last year with most of the same organizations. Therefore the committee decided that we do not need to host a separate event this year. We will publicize the Old Stone House Event.

There will an in-person weatherization discussion at St. Johnsbury Hub on September 26 at 1 pm. We will also publicize this event. Pam will talk to Juliet Emas at the Hub about collaborating on that event.

5. Window Dressers

There will be two Window Dresser event this fall hosted by several town energy committees. St. Johnsbury Energy Committee will help publicize these events. The committee members and town residents can reach out to these committees if they want to volunteer. Some volunteer tasks need training and others do not. Pam will contact Marilyn McEnery about St. Johnsbury residents being accepted at events in other towns.

6. Mass Timber

Pam presented information about the use of mass timber in the Fairbanks Museum's Science Annex under construction. Mass timber uses new technology to glue, nail or dowel wood products together in layers. The local project is the first building in the world to use eastern hemlock cross-laminated timber. Like the industrial hemp project we heard about in August, it has the potential to be an economic driver for the region, as well as an environmental improvement.

7. St. Johnsbury School Projects

Lynn reported on the activities taking place at the St. Johnsbury School. Heather Mulligan, a 6th grade science teacher at the school, is moving to a new position as Outdoor Education Coordinator. She will be a much-needed and appreciated resource for teachers. She will be facilitating outdoor education that focuses on hands-on activities and in the community. There is a desperate need to do outdoor activities and she has a lot of good ideas.

8. EV and Transportation Fair

The second annual EV and Transportation Fair will be held at Marty's First Stop in Danville on September 17. This year's fair is not just about the quiet, efficient, non-polluting vehicles still shrouded in myths, but transportation as a whole.

9. NEK Transportation Forum

There will be a Zoom Community discussion to explore different solutions to NEK's transportation needs and desires on September 25 from 1 to 2:30 pm. The forum is hosted by Vermont's Agency of Transportation and will pave the way for more accessible and safer transportation in the NEK. All participants will receive (\$45) compensation for sharing their time and expertise.

10. Vermont Climate Toolkit

The Climate Council is developing a Vermont Climate Toolkit as part of the Climate Action Plan. It is designed towards municipalities. Pam will send the slides to committee members.

Next meeting is Monday October 3, 5:30-7:00 pm. It will be in-person at the Welcome Center. The Welcome Center will be open from 5-7pm.