

ENERGY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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Town of Somers
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

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DON BLEASDALE
JERRY STERN
CO-CHAIRMAN



MEETING MINUTES

November 1, 2017

Co-Chairman Jerry Stern called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

The following members were present: Frank Maricic, Jerry Stern, Chris Zaberto, and Rick Warren.

Don Bleasdale, Jane Harsha, Stacie Vourakis, and Marialisa Zywochenko were absent.

Associate members Michael Blum, Susanne Cox, Jason Crawford, and Ian Diamond were present.

Minutes – The minutes of the October 4, 2017 meeting were not approved as there was not a quorum of those present at that meeting in attendance this evening.

OLD BUSINESS

NYSERDA'S Clean Energies Communities GRANT Program Update – Mr. Stern has reached out to the NYSERDA folks for an update on whether or not the Town of Somers was chosen for NYSERDA'S Clean Energies Communities GRANT Program to add crosswalks on Brick Hill Road, Plum Brook Road and Sunderland Lane. Unfortunately, they have been very delayed in awarding the grants. A Press Release announcing our participation in the program was prepared by the Town Supervisor. It was reviewed by NYSERDA and returned as some of the items listed didn't have documentation for certification, e.g. Energy Code Enforcement. We will try to use these for the 2018 NYSERDA grant application. It has taken almost 6 weeks to obtain what was needed from the Finance Department to complete the electric usage benchmarking requirement. Mr. Bleasdale, Mr. Crawford, Ms. Cox, and Mr. Stern have offered to help with inputting the information. Mr. Stern has reached out to the Hudson Valley Regional Council to arrange for the training session that they will provide. It will take about 2

hours and then folks can do this from their own computer.

NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities 2018 GRANT Program – Applications will be available in 2018. The goal is to apply for \$250,000 and in doing so, two new high action items will have to be completed. All agreed that they will include LED Streetlight Replacement and Climate Smart Community certification. Resources from the Mid-Hudson Street Light Consortium will be utilized and the focus will be on the ball field lights and street lights. A list of actions needed to be completed for certification as a Climate Smart Community was reviewed and discussed. We only need 120 points which should not be such a difficult task if everyone pitches in and helps out. Mr. Stern will be assigning tasks to all Committee members. It was suggested that the Committee find out who was awarded the \$250,000 grants in 2017 and request a copy of their application.

Sustainable Westchester's Zero Emissions Summit Update – Mrs. Zywotchenko represented the Committee at Sustainable Westchester's Zero Emissions Summit on the 21st of September at the Scandinavia House in New York City. A group of people from Finland were present and spoke of their accomplishments in achieving a goal of reducing their carbon footprint. One of the speakers was Westchester resident Joe Carvin founder and CEO of One World and Virtuous. He replicated some programs done in a Finnish school in the Port Chester schools. Mrs. Zywotchenko was very impressed and would like to consult with him to do the same in the Somers schools. All agreed. She will reach out to Mr. Carvin and hopefully give an update at the December 6th meeting as she was not present this evening.

Solar Farm Project Update – Last month Ian Diamond offered to contact Sebastian Capital, new owners of the former IBM and Pepsico sites about leasing space for a solar farm to serve both commercial and residential needs. When they are fully occupied, it is their intention to install solar for their use. The difficulty is the viability of economics since NYSEG's rates are so low. Since numerous residents were unable to have solar installed at their homes, this option has to be researched further, although some feel as though there is not enough demand to see this to fruition. It was suggested that solar combined with batteries be explored as well.

Strategy for Re-Engaging the Committee Including Review of 2012 Somers Sustainability Action Plan – Last month, a discussion took place regarding a strategy for re-engaging the Committee including a review of the Somers Sustainability Action Plan (SSAP) which was created in 2012. All agreed that the community has to be educated about what the Somers Energy Environment Committee is about. As part of this process, all were asked to review the SSAP and come prepared with two objectives this evening that they think are achievable and meaningful to move forward with as 2018 priorities. Ms. Cox was happy to share the ideas she had: speaking with all schools to determine their curriculum and creating programs/projects that would work in conjunction with and internship possibilities; co-sponsoring an informational speaker series with the Somers Library; reaching out to the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts about assisting them with required projects; partnering with the Somers Woman's Club;

making a connection with the residents of Heritage Hills to determine their interests and ways in which the Energy Environment Committee can assist.

Meeting with Local Town Energy Groups – Mr. Bleasdale and Mr. Stern thought perhaps it might make sense to arrange to meet with other local Town energy groups in an effort to share ideas. Bedford has an Energy Advisory Panel; Lewisboro a Sustainability Committee; New Castle a Sustainability Advisory Board; North Salem doesn't have a group; and Yorktown has an Energy Advisory Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Energy in the Bank Presentation – At 5:30 p.m. this evening, Mr. Diamond, Mr. Stern and Mr. Zaberto met with folks from Energy in the Bank who submitted a solar proposal for the Town owned buildings in an effort to save the Town money in their electric costs. The challenges will be locating a site that can be used and coming up with rates that will in fact be a savings to the Town. Energy in Bank will prepare some sample estimates for the Committee. The Somers Energy Environment Committee will continue to explore potential sites (e.g., the old IBM and Pepsi sites) with the new owners.

Westchester Power Aggregation – New Rates 2016 to 2018 – Mr. Stern shared the Westchester Power Aggregation new rates that reflected 2016, 2017 and 2018. They decreased for 2016 - 2018, both the brown and green rates are fractions of a penny different per kW/h.

Continued Attendance Issues – In an effort to re-engage the Committee and accomplish goals, accountability of the members of the Somers Energy Environment Committee is absolutely necessary. Numerous attempts have been made to deal with this dilemma to no avail. This evening's meeting was once again an example, as there was not a quorum and more of the Associate Members attended than the appointed members. Mr. Stern has reached out to Councilman Clinchy via email with a copy to Supervisor Morrissey to gain their assistance with a solution.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next regular monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 6 at 7:00 p.m. at the Recreation Center in Van Tassell Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Somers Energy Environment Committee

cc: Energy Environment Committee
Town Board
Town Clerk
Open Space Committee

