

**Regional Energy Committee - Meeting Notes**  
**March 9, 2010**  
**NRPC Office - 7-9pm**

**Attendees**

Guy Palardy, Alburgh  
Bob Buerman, South Hero  
Skip Taylor, Fairfax  
David Leslie, Grand Isle  
Suzanna Brown, Georgia  
Kathy Lavoie, Swanton Town  
Deb Perry, NRPC

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Energy Audit Program**

- So far the NRPC has received 7 nominations from Grand Isle and 10 nominations from Franklin County. We anticipate that our funds will be able to pay for 5-7 audits in Grand Isle and approximately 20 audits in Franklin County.
- The information submitted by each town was summarized in a chart provided to the Committee. Deb explained that Btu per square foot is a good indication of thermal efficiency. The potential for lighting upgrades was determined in communication with Efficiency Vermont (EVT). Buildings that are highly likely to have lighting opportunities are expected to receive a lighting walkthrough from EVT. They may also visit other buildings if they are in the vicinity.
- The Committee reviewed the nominations in Grand Isle and ranked them in the following order:
  1. Alburgh Town Library
  2. South Hero Town Office
  3. Grand Isle Annex
  4. South Hero Town Garage
  5. Alburgh Senior Meal Site
  6. Grand Isle Town Office
  7. South Hero Museum
- The Committee reviewed the nominations for Franklin County and ranked them in the following order:
  1. St. Albans City Police/Fire
  2. Swanton Town Office
  3. Enosburgh Town Highway Garage
  4. St. Albans Town Hall
  5. St. Albans City Community Center
  6. Enosburgh Town Clerk's Office
  7. Enosburgh Emergency Services Building
  8. Fairfield Town Office
  9. Enosburg Falls Water Department Building
  10. Montgomery Town Hall
- The Committee discussed how we can solicit additional nominations. It was decided that Deb will write an article for the regional newsletter and local newspapers about the program and the buildings that have been selected. We can also continue to identify buildings after the auditors are selected. If we cannot spend all the funds allocated for audits, we could request to move these funds into implementation.
- In considering the use of implementation funds, we should also consider helping towns that already paid for their own audits.

- Deb will work on developing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for energy auditors. It is expected that this will be released at the end of March, with proposals due in mid/late April. Each proposal will have to include a sample report.
- The committee discussed who should be used as a source of information regarding the replacement of old heating systems. The auditor will conduct a combustion analysis and determine that a heating system is inefficient. From there, should a town request proposals from heating system dealers or should an architect/engineer be hired to help develop a holistic plan for heating a building (which might include establishing zones, looking at different heating fuel options, etc)? Perhaps the auditor could be used to help a town review different proposals.
- The Committee discussed whether or not to require that auditors be on the EVT list. Unfortunately, there are not many local contractors on this list currently. However, being on this list is proof of their qualifications and training, and EVT will provide some quality assurance in reviewing reports. Deb will send the committee a copy of the EVT list. The RFQ should focus on contractors on that list.

### **Regional Renewable Energy Study**

- Deb provided examples of other regional-scale projects that have been completed: an example of a regional study from the Pioneer Valley in Massachusetts that considered the potential of a variety of renewable energy sources (<http://www.pvpc.org/activities/landuse-cleanenergy.shtml>) and an example from the Town of Burke that assessed the feasibility of creating a wood pellet manufacturing facility.
- The committee feels that a study similar to the one for the Pioneer Valley would be most useful for the region.
- Deb also provided information about the Renewable Energy Atlas being developed by the VT Sustainable Jobs Fund. This atlas will be available online and will include maps of each renewable energy resource so that a town can “click” on an area and find out the potential for that resource. This should be a good starting point for the regional study.
- It is challenging to study the potential for these resources because the technologies are always changing and the financial feasibility may be affected by tax/incentive programs, state or federal policy, etc.
- Should our study attempt to look into the future and consider whether the future might be based entirely on local, distributed generation (perhaps even in each home)?
- The study could be structured to look at opportunities at different scales: home/business, neighborhood, town, region
- The study could include case studies of projects that would be replicable in the region. These could also be used as educational materials.
- The study could be presented in a web-based format that includes links to websites for more information. This way the reader could access current information about incentive programs which will likely change over time.

### **Energy Chapter of Regional Plan**

- Deb distributed copies of the energy chapter of the regional plan.
- Committee members should read the chapter prior to the next meeting and come with ideas about how it could be updated.

### **Topics for Future Meetings**

- The next meeting will be in late May or early June. Deb will send out a request for available dates. The agenda will include an update on the audit program, establishing a schedule for updating the regional energy chapter, and to brainstorm about the regional energy conference.
- In April, interested committee members are invited to participate in the selection of auditors.

### **Other Announcements**

- The Northwest Vermont Development Association (NVDA) will be hosting a renewable energy fair on Saturday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at Johnson State College.