

Concord Energy and Environment Advisory Committee

Monthly March 22, 2022

6:30 PM

City Council Chambers

Attendees: Rob Werner (Chair), Councilor Stacey Brown, , Nick Babladelis, Carl Cooley, Dot Currier, Jerry Eaton, Jessica Forrest, Jennifer Galbraith, Sam Durfee (Staff)

Absent: Councilor Byron Champlin, Jeff Evans (CEEAC), Henry Herndon (CEEAC), Jonathan Weinberg (CEEAC)

Guest: Jenita Aquino-Patzan, Concord High School

I. Welcome and Introductions

6:32 pm - Rob Werner opened the meeting

Rob asks for comments on minutes. Rob made a motion, seconded by Carl Cooley, to accept the minutes of the March 10, 2022 meeting. *Approved unanimously.*

II. Municipal Projects Update

Briar Hydro Net Metering – The Dept. of Energy needs to approve the agreement before it may go into effect.

Street Lighting Conversion – The conversion is complete; however, some lights need to be fixed before the project is complete. Any press conference or public event to celebrate these significant projects must await final approval and completion of these two projects

Potential Unutil Solar Project – There have been no announcements of where Unutil may decide to propose placement of the solar installation. West Portsmouth Street or the former landfill site on Old Turnpike Road are still possibilities. NextEra was previously interested in the West Portsmouth Street site; zoning ordinance changes have now made that site more desirable. NextEra has shown no further interest in pursuing an installation at the Wastewater Treatment Plant site. A comment was made that the City is ready to move on from partnering with NextEra.

III. Community Power

A presentation was made in December before the Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee (FPAC) on whether Concord should join the community power coalition with other municipalities. No action or recommendation has emerged from FPAC. The CEEAC will follow up with FPAC to see if any outstanding issues/questions need to be addressed.

IV. 2022 Policy Priorities/Planning

Three well qualified candidates were interviewed for the summer intern position funded from a grant from UNH. The candidate chosen and accepted is Carla Feigelson, a graduate student at Colorado State University with experience in land-based carbon accounting. This experience will

be helpful in inputting the base line data on the City's carbon profile that our previous intern created. Once inputted it can be used with the model the City has access to by way of our membership in "???" to predict future carbon emissions given assumptions about changes in behavior. She will work remotely; however, she will visit UNH in July when it is hoped that the CEEAC will meet her in person.

V. Weatherization Concord Update – Waiting List for efficiency upgrades

The legislature passed and the Governor signed the bill restoring the utility energy efficiency programs. The CEEAC's contacts at Unitil and Liberty Utilities have said they are awaiting an order from the NH PUC by May 1 before restarting the programs; however, Councilor Brown's application has come off on the waiting list, and work has been scheduled for her home beginning in April. The committee will contact the utilities again and inquire how customers will be served who are currently on the waiting list.

VI. Concord School District

Rob reported on a presentation he attended with Concord School District business managers and the architect of the proposed new Junior High building. The construction current estimated at \$85 million would result on a building that was net zero. It will be made of sustainable materials. The YMCA may partner with the school district and construct facilities which will be used by the junior high and the YMCA. If the 38-acre parcel on Clinton Street is chosen for the site, extending water supply to the adjoining Birch Street Community Gardens should be explored during the planning stages.

The Nature Conservancy is taking a lead in helping the State to understand how to administer \$17 million in federal funds coming to the State for electric infrastructure. The Committee would be interested in applying for those funds for EV charging stations and replacing/retrofitting school buses with electric motors.

VII. State Legislative Priorities

Two bills have been merged and passed in the House which would extend the net metering 5-megawatt limit to State-owned facilities and the University System: UNH, Plymouth and Keene and the Community Colleges. House Bill 1148 passed the House which would prohibit county and municipal governments from preferring or specifying any fuel use over any other. The bill is now in the Senate.

VIII. Community Gardens Water Access

See Junior High discussion above.

IX. Sustainable Director Job Description

The CEEAC is willing to assist the City Manager in crafting the description of duties which this new position may entail. Much of the “easy” energy saving opportunities have already been captured by City Departments.

Councilor Brown discussed the conclusion of public meetings regarding the Gully Hill land behind the Post Office - Buffalo Wild Wings properties. Currently all the land is leased to a local dairy farmer for growing corn. The parcel is along a bus route and close to the center of the City; therefore, community gardens is also a recommended use. The City Council will review how the next lease and future use will be determined based upon the community meetings.

Upon motion made by Nick Babladelis, seconded by Rob Werner, it was *VOTED unanimously* to adjourn at 8:17 PM.