

Voting Attendees: Karl Johnson, Peter Sterling, Dan Jones, Mark Seltzer, Tim Favorite, Geoff Fitzgerald, Kate Stephenson

Non-voting attendees: Sal Alfano, Mike Miller, Chris Lumbra

Events

Karl cites an email from Amy (who was unable to attend). Window Dressers event in November completed 342 inserts for 53 households, and had so many hands on deck that we were able to cancel the last day of our build. Barre City has offered use of the Aud for next year. The cost of our low income "special rate" inserts for this year are being covered by a grant received by Central VT Regional Planning Commission for regional Window Dressers Builds. Sam Lash is going to continue to seek grant money to help out all of the Builds in the CVRPC coverage area. This year we provided 76 inserts to 9 households at a "pay as you can" rate. Volunteers from Montpelier Rotary and Barre Town and Calais Energy Committees have mentioned they would like to collaborate in the future and potentially organize multiple builds per year. TW Wood Art Gallery is seeking a grant for inserts and tentatively discussing a site specific build sometime later this winter.

VECAN conference is the first week of December - Peter encourages MEAC to attend.

Sustainability Coordinator Update

Chris Lumbra updated us with news on the Rec Center, the LED lighting project, and the Main Street parking lot fast chargers. Karl spoke briefly with Allison Ross the Rec Center's thermal storage project - it is a first in the nation project of its kind, and there is interest in capturing the data from it.

No update on the Water Resource Recovery Facility project.

Solar Array Purchase Option

Geoff researched and found that there was a revised agreement that the city signed that eliminated all potential purchase options, however Todd believed it would not have been beneficial to the city in any case. Also spoke with Alex Bravakis about the contract and what the end of the period might look like.

Energy Chapter of Municipal Plan

Mike Miller mentions that lots of revisions made based on Kate and Geoff's feedback, feels comfortable with it. He will send it to Chris and Karl once the plan is finished. The goals are for it to clearly explain the vision to a layperson or someone new to the city, and to express an action plan as opposed to just aspirations. Existing policies will be examined for effectiveness. Kate: based on Geoff's update, we should remove the piece about purchasing solar arrays, as well as net metered solar. A few more sets of edits coming up, which will make way for public input, which will be followed by a public hearing (which will probably be March, post-election). There may be a number of hearings on this, depending on how much discussion each item has.

Charter Discussion

Quorum discussion: MEAC currently has 11 members and 2 vacancies. Karl proposes redlining sections 2 and 6 to reflect the current reality of attendance. He will make a proposed change which we can vote on at a future meeting.

Mission discussion: Dan has talked with Michael Billingsley in Plainfield about FEMA money for a Hazard Mitigation Committee. We will likely be facing resource challenges given the current political climate. Dan feels we have done a great job in the energy committee thus far but it will be tough to proceed much further with our current mission. He is proposing a new direction for, or within, MEAC. Some proposals: reimagine what flood plains look like, what does that mean in terms of climate projections, what are the issues of potential fire hazards, economic prospects, what are resources available to the city. This is a very broad area potentially, but we need to look at it systematically rather than drawing lines at the outset. Planning has been happening within silos and under an assumption that next year will look the same as the last. There may be some overlap with the Montpelier Resilience Commission, but they have largely been focused on reacting to disasters like ones that have already occurred, as opposed to imagining new ones, additionally they tend to focus on matters at a high level, whereas MEAC's strength in the past has been on lower-level matters. Question on whether Country Club road might be a potential new downtown area, however there is so much infrastructure and activity already in our current downtown. We should look at our energy work as part of hazard mitigation. Plainfield/Marshfield has a hazard mitigation and energy committee. Dan will ask Michael B. if he can attend our December meeting or some upcoming one. Some general agreement voiced about a feeling of loss of direction for MEAC in the past few years, and a desire to continue to make a positive difference, even if not solely based on energy transition. Next steps, look at FEMA funding, look at the charge of the Resilience Commission to contrast their potential goals with ours. Next meeting can contain further discussion of hazard mitigation. What are constraints and what is possible?

Other Business

Will meet on December 19th. MEAC received an email from Evelyn about the annual plan - Karl requests assistance on compiling the information.