

Approved Kensington Energy Committee Minutes
March 19, 2024

Call to Order: 1:34pm

In attendance: Kensington Energy Committee (KEC) members Charlie Horn, Zeke Schmois, Steve Sniderman, Susan Varn, and Select Board member Bob Gustafson; guests Katrin Kasper, Clean Energy NH and Rev Cheryl Stromski, Kensington Congregational Church

Minutes approved: The draft minutes from 2.23.24 were approved.

Community Power (CP) update

- * Community Power was approved by town vote on 3/12/24.
- * A cost sharing agreement between Kensington and the Community Power Coalition of NH (CPCNH) was signed on 3/13/24, formalizing our partnership.
- * Sign-off by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is in progress.
- * Kensington is scheduled to launch CP in June.
- * Town Administrator Kathleen Felch has been designated as Authorized Power Officer for CP to act on behalf of the Board, if needed.
- * 60 days before the launch, CPCNH will mail all residents notification detailing the program, including the initial supply rate, and clean energy options as compared to Unitil's rate.
- * 30 days after the mailing, CP becomes our new default energy supply option.

Discussion and next steps with CP – *actions are italicized, with accountability*

- * **Net-metered solar customers:** We can't get a list of these residents to communicate their options for participating in CP. Because net-metered customers have different packages, presumably they'll need guidance in making their decisions about CP. *CPCNH or Clean Energy NH likely has produced info that we can obtain (SVarn).*
- * **KEC event at Eastman's or the Town Hall:** We discussed the value of KEC holding a CP public awareness/information event to help the community become more familiar with CP. The pros and cons of the 2 potential locations were evaluated. *We will speak with Eastman's about their interest/willingness to host this, and other possible future KEC events such as forums on tax credits, upgrades, "Going Solar?" etc. (SVarn).*

Other projects and activities – *actions are italicized, with accountability*

- * **LED lighting project at the elementary school:** CHorn invited our guest Karin Kasper from Clean Energy NH to talk with us about this project. BGustafson explained the town owns the elementary school building, but the School Board runs the building and manages maintenance. The town would need to get District buy-in/approval for a project like this. We'd need to show that such action would reduce expenses, with no budget impact. With School Board interest, best to first offer to conduct an energy audit of the school building through NH Saves/Unitil. An audit may reveal other cost-effective

ways the building can become more energy efficient, also. There are grants for audits and for the work itself, and NH expects to receive new Inflation Reduction Act monies this year. *We discussed speaking first with Bob Hall, Kensington's representative to the Joint SAU16 Board, about the best way to approach the School Board about LED +/- other upgrades to the school (CHorn, SVarn).*

*** Energy audit and upgrades to the Congregational Church**

Guest Rev Cheryl Stromski shared information on funding opportunities for the Congregational Church and possibly Kensington's Unitarian Church through Gerke Grants. Per working on LED for the elementary school with the School Board, KEC's role would be potential partner with church leadership, not lead entity. *We will stay in touch with Cheryl about opportunities to support their energy goals (CStromski).*

*** Kensington Home Energy Program (KHEEP)**

KEC recently launched its first educational video. With ZSchmois's online introduction, CHorn focused on geothermal and air source heat pumps. *SSniderman's video is up next, with hot water heat pumps (which are essentially free after all available rebates). SVarn (solar) or JPraded (Biomass) will follow.*

*** Future outreach**

Guest Karin Kasper from Clean Energy NH is a great resource for our current work, and also for other opportunities to educate the town about energy upgrades (e.g. their "Button Up" and Solar" workshops). She recommended that we offer residents different-sized options, including low-cost actions that anyone can afford, such as energy audits, and Window Dressors' build-you-own window inserts. She advised us to not name vendors we prefer in our outreach. Clean Energy NH maintains a list of vendors for reference. *Karin Kasper (karin@cleanenergynh.org) offered to continue to support our work.*

Next Energy Committee Meeting:

Tuesday 4/16/24 at 1:30, Town Hall (*note this is **not** the 2nd Tuesday of the month, as usual*)

Meeting adjourned: 2:45pm

Submitted by: Susan Varn