

Energy Committee Meeting April 30, 2012  
Marshfield Energy and Climate Change Committee  
Plainfield Energy Group

In Attendance: Rich Phillips (chair), Nick Seifer (time keeper), Faeterri Silver (acting note-taker), Joel Trupin, Ed Hutchinson, Anne Miller, Dan Chordorkoff, and Bob Atchinson and Lori Stratton of Plainfield. Please forgive me if I forgot anyone.

Meeting commenced at 7 pm.

1. Faeterri volunteered as acting note taker for this meeting.
2. We will have to approve minutes of April 2, 2012 meeting at next meeting because we did not have a copy to review.
3. Solar at OSC: Anne and Ed reporting: Ed announced that the Final Draft of the Vermont Small Scale Renewable Energy Incentive Program was approved. The following link is to the program's Incentive Design for 2012. [www.nerc-vt.org/incentives](http://www.nerc-vt.org/incentives) .The incentive for PV solar at the OSC would be \$2.25 per watt to 10kW or \$22,500 or 50% of cost. We will not be put to voters before town meeting for we are not financially ready. We need to put together a preliminary design of a system and get real estimates from vendors; planning, numbers, funding, and get the Selectboard's approval by December to warn for Town Meeting Day. Nick made a point that we all don't really know where solar is going in the next 6 months to a year.
4. Twinfield: Rich reported that our school did approve conservation guidelines suggestions from our audits and e-gages such as turning off lights and computers at night, boilers off in summer, buses not idling, etc. Twinfield will show at least a 20% energy reduction if the guidelines are followed and the elementary roof is fixed as planned. There is a concern about whether the contractor chosen to do the roofing will follow the insulation installation guidelines. E-gages are still in place and hopefully will remain to assist in further energy use reduction efforts. There is still a 45W blip at night caused by the dishwasher water heater booster coming on. We are looking to see how to remedy this by adding a switch or a timer. Overall it has been a productive effort. Nick commented that part of the plan is to receive direct feedback. Rich will email particulars of what was suggested to Twinfield.

Education piece: Charlie Wanzer, science teacher, is working on next year's science curriculum and wants to have students involved with the design of the Twinfield solar system in the fall.

5. PACE: Our Selectboard had many concerns with the original PACE legislation on 2009. The new legislation has addressed many of their concerns. The PACE program is more specific and workable now.

Joel, Nick and Rich attended a meeting in Craftsbury on April 18 to get updated on the status of the current PACE program. A summary of the concept that became effective 1/1/12 is the following. What we want to ask the townspeople of Marshfield is do they want to adopt this program.

Residents of town having voted for the program would be able to borrow up to \$30,000 for weatherization improvements and alternative energy systems and pay the loan back through an assessment similar to property taxes. Funds for the loans would be raised by a state-operated credit facility with a total interest rate estimated to be around 6.5% (1% of this is administrative costs). There would be a lien on the property in the amount of the loan, which will stay with the property through

sales. The town borrows the necessary funds from the state credit facility under the terms of an intermunicipal agreement authorized by statute. There is no pledge of the general obligation of the town.

If requested by the town, Efficiency Vermont would send and collect the required annual payment and forward it the credit facility. The town, when necessary, would force the collection of the assessment as it does other taxes. The lien is secondary to the mortgage so the town might stand to lose some outstanding payments owed by the homeowner. This loss would be reduced or eliminated by payment from a 2% reserve account. Even without that payment from the reserve, under normal circumstances, the only amount potentially lost is the outstanding payment due at the time of foreclosure since the lien will transfer to the next property owner.

The town effort appears to be filing the lien and the forced collection when necessary but this will be tracked and updated over the next several months. All costs are borne by the property owners using the system individually.

As set up in title 24, a municipality (town) borrows money from the program. Going through EV, a 20-year loan period can be established for a renewable energy project; the interests can be deducted from 1040 schedule A taxes. The loan can be paid off in full at any time. One can include borrowed money that is saved through retrofitting.

Let's try to pull this together in next few months. Plainfield is already on board with PACE and moving forward. This is a good opportunity for residents who don't have the money up front.

Nick and Rich are working on an article for next month's issue of Field Notes. We are considering using PACE at a community level, with net metering for group solar projects.

6. Neighborhood Groups update: Rich and Faeterri had met and visited maps of areas of Marshfield. Rich came up with a list of neighborhoods with potential contacts from those areas. We need to develop a standard description of the neighborhood project, along with an approach to recruitment and recruit the contacts. Rich will make these recruitment efforts.

Also Rich brought in a list of those who volunteered on the town meeting day energy survey. We went through both lists, putting those who filled out the survey onto the neighborhood list as potential contacts. Rich expressed strongly that we need to contact the people willing to help from the survey. Nick, Faeterri, Anne and Dan will call those who said they would help or host, verify this, get emails, send minutes, and mention programs in Marshfield and future projects. They will be asked whether they will join the Committee or help as needed.

7. Plainfield: Bob reported that there were 12 responses to the Plainfield survey. . As stated above Plainfield is already on board with PACE. Bob recruited three homeowners for Home Energy Visits by Twinfield students. Unfortunately this program was not a great success and was dropped.

In regards to municipal lighting, if Plainfield changed to LED lights, they would have to put and will put the sodium vapor lights on ebay, as the sodium vapor lights are owned by the town, about 10 years old, and not fully depreciated. Efficiency Vermont is low on funds and has changed incentives to reflect undepreciated future costs under \$100. Marshfield changed 29 lights without costs because the replacement project occurred before the financing change (just good luck).

Bob also reported on a personal proposed near-zero net energy (ZNE) barn project he is working on that includes a solar thermal system, cost \$4500 for the deconstructed frame, being done by Montpelier Construction. The project meets the new residential building energy standards. He will apply for the 30% federal tax credit and funding where available from the incentive programs through the state.