

August 31, 2022

Present: Camden Holland, Steve Doran, Elisa Grammer, Chip Wallace, Rick Parker, Liz Callahan.

We welcomed new members Camden and Steve to the committee and provided some background information on past and present projects. Chip sent a copy of the April 2022 carbon emissions inventory report to Camden and Steve. Camden is a renewable energy consultant who works helping companies purchase energy and pursue sustainability goals. Steve is a former marine and an electrical engineer, now consulting on offshore renewables.

Our past projects have not involved capital expenditures. Rather we have used grant money or spent only small amounts. Future possibilities include more improvements to town buildings, for example heat pumps. We could investigate future use of a revolving fund based on income from solar installations.

The April 2022 emission inventory identifies these main emissions categories: gasoline and diesel fuel use in vehicles, space and water heating in buildings, electricity consumption, off-road equipment (eg. Riding mowers). The emission estimates include residential and commercial as well as municipal energy use.

It will be beneficial to develop locally available carbon emissions data sources to supplement the inventory data that are based largely on statewide averages and estimates. Rick suggested forming a subcommittee on this topic. It may not be necessary for this committee to spend much time promoting electric vehicles. The U.S. transition to EVs is well underway and likely to happen over time without our input. The new high school is scheduled to have several EV charging stations when completed.

Solar site survey status. We need to involve DPW Director Wayne Amaral in the procurement process, along with Town Manager Angus Jennings. At our next scheduled meeting we hope to meet with Wayne to discuss what should be in a specification for site analysis. Cadmus has been providing useful information to us on this topic. Chip will write a draft specification document and circulate it for comment.

The town zoning bylaw section on ground mounted solar systems could present some obstacles for future projects.

Municipal aggregation. Camden has some experience with municipal aggregation. One key issue is the quality of the renewable energy certificates being supplied. How local do we want the supplied RECs to be? A lot of states take a position that the RECs have to be from within the state.

Elisa described the process for requesting town meeting approval, including finance committee review. She will send out a first draft of an informational pamphlet for use at town meeting.

Other business. Rick informed us that the town has hired a new DPW program and project manager, Christine Wallace. The new position should help the town improve its management of public works projects, including those involving energy efficiency and renewables.

Rick suggested we might apply for a new Green Communities grant, to implement a second phase of improved building energy controls at the 1910 Building and Council of Aging space. There are some funds remaining from a similar fall 2021 project that could help.