

IREC Steering Committee October Meeting
October 23, 2020

Present: Elizabeth Ferry (Barnard), Doug Fraser (Fairlee), Ryan Haac (Sharon), Kevin Grady (Strafford), Neal Leitner (Woodstock), Geoff Martin (TRORC)

Action items highlighted in yellow are for the IREC to pursue.

Action items highlighted in green are for Steering Committee members to pursue.

1. Additions/changes to the agenda

No changes made.

2. Comments

Elizabeth is pleased with how things have been going, but feels it can be a challenge deciding how to prioritize various projects.

Kevin asked about the shared drive, and whether there could be a document for each town located in the drive to keep track of projects and action items. Doug would prefer to email.

Geoff will keep a list of projects and their status current in the drive for each town, and committee members can choose whether or not to use it.

3. Updates on shared priorities and opportunities

Energy Services Performance Contracting

To date, Sharon and Woodstock have signed on to participate in an RFQ for an ESCO. Geoff meets with Thetford next Monday and Fairlee's Selectboard will discuss the topic next Monday as well. Barnard chose not to participate and to pursue individual projects instead.

Kevin stated that the Strafford Selectboard will discuss this topic at one of the next two Selectboard meetings.

Solar

Fairlee, Sharon, and Woodstock all have opportunity for additional net-metering credits for its municipal accounts.

Thetford and Strafford are both exploring community solar opportunities. Vermont Law School will be presenting to Thetford's SB next Monday on community solar options.

Thetford will record the meeting and Geoff will send the recording to the Steering Committee.

Vermont Law School will present to Barnard later this year on ownership models and issues by array size. Steering Committee members will be welcome to attend.

GMP EV charging station leasing pilot program

From GMP:

"Aiming for mid-November now! We're going to leverage a VEDA loan for low-interest financing, which can be paid right on the GMP bill. We haven't finalized pricing yet, but our target is the \$55-70/month range per Level 2 charging port. Here are the high-level details:

- Install one or more Level 2 chargers for use by employees or the public for no up-front cost
- Charging hardware, installation, maintenance, and networking are all paid for on GMP bill under a fixed monthly subscription, with equipment financed through the Vermont Economic Development Authority
- Site hosts can set access hours and price to charge, with the ability to give preferential pricing to certain driver groups (e.g. employees)
- EV drivers activate and pay for charging sessions using a mobile app"

Neal noted that this timing should work well for Woodstock – the meters were approved by the trustees and the development and design review boards will review them in November.

Stretch Code

Opportunity for any town to adopt Stretch Code, which is a higher energy standard than the Residential Building Energy Standards. Thetford's Selectboard will consider this on Monday.

Strafford might look at either adopting Stretch Code or encouraging it by reducing or eliminating permit fees for homes that can prove they met the standard.

Elizabeth suggested training/incentivizing local builders to meet the standard. She was unsure whether Barnard would be able to enforce an energy code. Geoff mentioned that the Residential Building Energy Standards (RBES) are a state-wide code, but that it's typically up to builders/homeowners to self-certify that they have met the standards. If a town requires a Certificate of Occupancy, then the builder/homeowner would be required to turn in an RBES certificate, testifying that they have met the RBES or Stretch Code.

Kevin suggested having penalties for not meeting the code.

Geoff will look into setting up a training for local contractors on energy efficiency and energy codes. He will also ask South Burlington for more information on the process they went through to adopt Stretch Code, how they are enforcing it, and how they are spreading the word about it.

Electric vehicle/idle-reduction technology demonstration with Vermont Clean Cities Coalition

- Webinar for fleet managers in December about types of vehicles/technologies there is interest in demoing, with intention of getting long-term demos of vehicles that could move across VT, NH, and ME next year.
- Could plan an event with Clean Cities Coalition in the Upper Valley

Technologies that are applicable for Highway vehicles are likely most useful for the IREC towns.

IREC Internship

Geoff is working with a great intern name Miller Ward. He lives in Thetford and has offered to help support work of the IREC program. Currently he is creating charts and figures to display each town's

energy consumption and costs. He will also be developing a greenhouse gas emissions inventory for each town.

Misc ideas (not discussed at meeting)

- Bulk fuel purchasing
- WEX card
- Budget planning
- Window Dressers

Future of Rural Transit

This is an effort spearheaded by the VT Clean Cities Coalition, VEIC, Vermont Energy Education Program, and Green Mountain Transit.

Project proposal

Project pitch at EAN Annual Summit

Geoff asked if any town would be interested in participating in their initial feasibility study, with the hope of moving into a pilot phase in 2022.

Neal said that he met with Woodstock Sherry Sousa, the Superintendent of Schools for the Windsor Central Supervisory Union. **He suggested that Geoff reach out to her.**

Elizabeth said that while she would be interested, she didn't think that Barnard has school busses because of all of the dirt roads.

Ryan thought that Sharon is unusual because kids come into Sharon to go to school, but most residents leave Sharon to go to work. This probably would not be a good fit.

Kevin did not think that Strafford would be a good fit because the school busses are not owned by the District and the school is very small.

Public Outreach

Geoff reminded the Committee that the TRORC Button Up presentation is scheduled for November 18 at 12 PM.

He also alerted the Committee to the [Zero Energy Now](#) program and asked members to **help spread the word**. Elizabeth asked if this should be done through the listserv or by connecting with individuals that might be interested. Geoff thought either is appropriate.

Geoff suggested that he could ask **Miller to post some form of public outreach on the listservs** to inform the public about the IREC program's work as well as general energy-related information. The Committee agreed that this would be a good thing to do, and suggested bi-weekly posts.

Neal pointed out that it would be nice to do outreach to contractors, but that it is difficult to reach them. He noted that Efficiency Vermont hosted contractor outreach sessions in the past. **Geoff will follow up with Efficiency Vermont.**