

September 2014 REAC Minutes

Approve last meetings Minutes

- August Minutes were approved

Update and Expectations from Town Manager/ Town Council

- Council reviewed town comprehensive plan. Item # 5 is about the REAC committee. The 4 focus areas are to a) reduce energy consumption, b) determine and describe town interest in energy initiatives, c) Assess need for new guidelines on alternative energy installations, d) continue pursuit of natural gas.
- Role of offsets was considered. In some cases we may invest in carbon offsets instead of when using
- We should create an outline of necessary/ recommended policies by December.
- We should also be prepared to give a sense of what we are thinking about in terms of a plastic bag ban/ fee also by December.
- Rather than focusing on details in these documents, make sure to address the major strategies.
- Because of the timing of the Energy Fair, we may ask for an extension until February. This will allow us to use feedback from the fair and extended time to pull our document together.

Plastic Bag Discussion

- Falmouth has 4 large box stores - Shaws, Hannaford, Walmart and ? Consider calling them and find out how many bags they use per year.
- After the Portland bag fee, several citizens wrote letters to the council requesting that Falmouth adopt a similar fee system to Portland.
- Why are plastic bags bad? What is the extent of the problem in Falmouth? What does it make sense to do legislatively? Can the town invest in/ contribute to people's reusable bags?
- Taio may have contacts at the stores to get information about current/ past usage.
- Freeport is also working on a similar project. They do not have a committee dedicated to this. Yarmouth may also be working a similar project.
- Kimberly will talk to Taio and contact the major retailers
- Barb will search ordinances and finding out why plastic bags are bad from other towns.
- Anya will reach out to students in Freeport to find out about their involvement.
- Jed will look into what other communities are doing regarding the issue.
- The Gilpins may show Bag It at their home. This could be used as we get closer to actual legislative action to spread the word further.

Mason-Motz Community Center Update

- The council discussed adding a pellet boiler instead of natural gas extensively, but in the end natural gas seemed to be the more sensible solution in this case.
- The building will continue to be used in the same way. The investment will be used to maintain use of the building as is.
- We would like to create a policy where an energy audits are conducted before building or major remodels. We intend to put this in our 2015 REAC report.

Energy Inventory

- The origin of the 2% of per year reduction in CO2 emissions was put into question. Jed seemed to believe that this was the agreed upon when the Green Ribbon Report was put forward. Claudia may be able to confirm his institutional memory.

- The balance of what the town agreed on versus what we did was 100 tons of CO2. This could be evened out using offsets, or at least talked about in terms of cost per offset.
- Our committee should take a tour of the waste water treatment plant to learn more about their energy usage.

2015 Home Energy Fair

- The fair will be held on January 24th.
- We may need more space to hold the fair this year. Ideas include:
 - Use the gym (lots of competition)
 - Use middle school or elementary school gym
 - Use Motz gym.
 - Expand into the hallways.

Upcoming movies

- Ocean Frontiers I will show on Thursday, September 25th. Ocean Frontiers II will be shown October 23rd.