

Town of Dublin Energy Committee Meeting

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

7 PM at Town Hall, ground floor

In attendance: James Finnegan, Blake Minckler, Jack Munn, Susan Peters (Select Board).

Community Power. Susan provided an update on Cheshire Community Power. A public information session is scheduled for Monday, October 16 at 7 pm at Town Hall, 3rd floor. Prior to that time, Cheshire Community Power will be sending an informational mailing to all Dublin residents. Using a template provided by the Community Power Coalition of NH, Susan prepared a one-page, two-sided insert that will be included in the October Advocate going out later this week. She is also ordering road signs to publicize the meeting. Nelson and Fitzwilliam are also holding public information meetings during the week of October 16. Cheshire Community Power is scheduled to go live in November, with the change over date varying by customer depending upon when their meter is read.

Radically Rural Conference in Keene. James mentioned this conference which looks to be a great opportunity to learn and share ideas on a wide range of topics.

Municipal Solar. James and Jack recently visited the Archives to gather information about the history of the Town's capped landfill. Jack shared the information with his contacts at Novis Engineering who are knowledgeable about solar landfill projects. They looked at the landfill and transmission lines on aerial photography and an Eversource map finder. The good news is that Dublin's three-phase transmission line is under capacity by 2.4 megawatts, and could handle a large load from a solar array on the landfill (and send power back to the grid). There are many considerations to developing a proposal including access roads, topography and site characteristics (slope, ledge, drainage, etc.) to determine how much of the property is suitable for solar, three-phase power connection, EPA permitting, Eversource study of the capacity of their circuits (an interconnection permit is required), and landfill site plan including how much acreage is cleared. A developer would weigh the cost of construction vs. what they would get out of the project. A one megawatt solar array is big. A two megawatt solar farm would need 12 acres of land. One path would be to rent the land for a solar farm in exchange for lease payments which typically run \$1000 to \$2000 per month per acre; lease agreements typically run about 25 years and can be lucrative for a town. It is possible to have trails around a solar farm as the Dublin School has. An interesting example, the Town of Hillsborough has a solar farm on their landfill - Novis Engineering worked on the project. They sank footings into rubber buckets so that they wouldn't affect the cap. Other considerations of the Dublin site would include conservation and the ecology of the area as well as screening from residences including those on Boulder Drive. The Dublin ConCom could be helpful in developing a plan to study the potential environmental impact of a solar farm. We also need more information about the monitoring wells and capped landfill records from NHDES. In terms of engineering expertise, developers hire the engineers, and the town should not have to pay for an engineer.

Blake reminded everyone of John Kondos' advice to start small and get something rolling. Jack and Susan agreed to follow up with Greg Blake (South Pack Solar) to schedule site visits. Greg has been very helpful working with other local municipalities including Nelson and Harrisville.

August 23, 2023 minutes

On motion made by Blake and seconded by James, the minutes of the August 23 meeting were approved.

Action item - Municipal Solar. Reach out to Greg Blake to schedule site visits at various potential municipal solar sites including the Highway Barn, Fire Department, and Transfer Station (capped landfill).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan W. Peters