

WNYT Energy Working Group - Update - November 1st, 2018

Working group members: Kirk Richey, Eric Werthmam, Julie Last, Dermot McGuigan

Proposal: Transition working groups, such as the Energy Working Group, are requested to draft statements of both Vision and Mission, let's do so.

It is proposed, as a rough first draft by Dermot, that the Vision statement be for the Town of Woodstock be to combust zero fossil fuels for electricity, heating/cooling and transportation, such that there is no direct combustion for energy purposes. Further, that the combustion of biomass and biofuels be done as cleanly as possible and not as a mass substitute for the burning of oil/gas. And that attainable deadlines be set for achieving these goals.

The Mission statement should have as its initial focus the Woodstock Western Hamlet renewable heat and hot water project, as previously outlined. A goal and timeline needs to be drafted so as to further both the funding and selection of professional engineering to determine the project feasibility.

It is proposed that the Vision and Mission statements be drafted by January 1, 2019.

NYSERDA does not currently provide direct support for neighborhood or district renewable energy projects, the focus of our effort to date. The agency has its renewable thermal program under way, it is focussed on single family home and single building thermal solutions using ground and air source heat pumps.

So, let's look at both single home/business renewable thermal options and continue to consider & work on the original idea, including keeping in mind the need (or desire) for a wastewater system and the possible synergy with district heating.

Eric participated in a conference call Oct. 26 with Sustainable Hudson Valley, and other orgs, focussed on single building heat pump solutions, the NYSERDA program. Eric's report on the call is copied below.

Kirk continues to shepherd the Comprehensive Plan forward, reporting that the town board opened a public comment period and that the board have in mind a possible adoption date of the plan on November 20th. Adoption of the plan may be helpful towards progressing the Woodstock Western Hamlet project.

Let's continue to explore how Woodstock Transition can help facilitate the "drawing down" of our towns use of fossil fuels and do so in an open rather than a prescriptive way. Renewable district heating may not work here, at least for now. So, what are our options.

Eric's note on conference call re. NYSERDA thermal program is below in italics.

Melissa's project seems to be centered around single family homes and buildings that would use single building heat pumps. Unlike the solarize campaign I got the impression that people would be responsible for researching and purchasing their own heat pumps.

There were about 6-8 people on the call, a few of them representing MountainKeeper from the towns they lived in: Albany, Livingston, Sullivan county etc.

Melissa stressed that Geo-thermal heat source water pumps was a less familiar technology than Solar and so more explaining in the form of outreach should take place.

Her group was holding a press conference this Monday to launch the project and then she asked for suggestions on how to publicize the initiative.

Melissa talked about tabling, buttons and signs, social media around the program, creating a tool kit with sample press releases, working to get on Facebook - Instagram -Twitter, creating a newsletter and/or newsletter pieces that could go into company newsletters and/or government organizations, writing letters to the editor and especially making presentation to Town Boards.

She is preparing an Information Sheet that all the groups or initiatives could use.

Finally, Jimmy from New Paltz (I did not get his last name) said that a group in New Paltz was creating an Energy Efficiency Event for Nov.29th at St. Josephs Catholic church that was aimed at organizing around faith based people - which, of course, leaves me out - but the rest of you can decide to attend or not.

I did mention that we in Transition Town Woodstock had been exploring the idea of Community based heating systems which Melissa was aware of but I left it at that.

*Melissa did say that she would welcome all our suggestions.
End.*

This report, submitted to the WNYT council follows the last report filed in October 4th, 2018, which is posted on the WNYT website at:

<http://woodstocknytransition.org/category/working-groups/energy/>