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ACTON

**GREEN ADVISORY BOARD
JANUARY 13, 2014
MINUTES**

**ACTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY
486 MAIN STREET - CONFERENCE ROOM
6:30 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Keene, Eric Hudson, Padamaja Kuchimanchi, Dennis Loria, Mary Smith

MUNICIPAL PROPERTIES DIRECTOR: Dean Charter

ENERGY CONSERVATION ANALYST: Pamela Cady

GREEN ADVISOR TO THE SCHOOLS: Kate Crosby

RECORDING SECRETARY: Andrea Ristine

VISITOR: Renato Nakagomi, Frank Ramsbottom, Mark Barbadoro

6:38 Mr. Keene called the meeting to order.

STRETCH CODE

Frank Ramsbottom, Building Commissioner and Mark Barbadoro, Building Inspector from the Town of Acton Building Department, gave an overview of the current stretch and energy codes for new building construction.

Upon query by Ms. Smith, Mr. Barbadoro noted that the 2012 energy code will not come into effect until July 1, 2014 and is better than the current stretch code.

Mr. Ramsbottom noted that the 2012 energy code is strict on air infiltration and mandates three air exchanges or less per day. The Department of Environmental Resources (DOER) will draft the code and Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BPRS) will enforce it.

Mr. Barbadoro noted that the new stretch code needs to be adopted; the compliance trade-offs are odd. Mr. Ramsbottom agreed that it is a great idea but a builder can be creative and the prescriptive minimum can be manipulated; for instance a builder can use R15 insulation with 2"x4" studs when other builders will use R21 insulation. Home Energy Rating System (HERS) inspections are only conducted twice during construction where Mr. Barbadoro inspects new construction approximately eight times throughout the construction process.

Upon query by Mr. Charter, Ms. Crosby stated that there still is no definitive answer if Annual Town Meeting approval is needed to adopt the new stretch code.

Upon query by Ms. Cady, Mr. Ramsbottom stated that it varies from town to town but Acton takes energy conservation seriously so Acton is essentially looking for the same as HERS inspectors. He also noted that air exchange is not being looked at in great detail and without great concern; what

one would really want is neutral air pressure not negative pressure. He feels that the BBRs should be looking at air exchange versus efficiency. The national code is reviewed about every three years.

Both Mr. Ramsbottom and Mr. Barbadoro stated that they would appreciate if the Green Advisory Board would send their comments to the DOER regarding the new code as the time to comment is now.

Ms. Smith suggested that the Board discuss the issue with Mr. Friedman (not present at this meeting) and have him draft and send comments to the DOER since he is most familiar with this issue; realistically Acton should adopt the best code possible.

Ms. Cady noted that one of the five criteria as a Green Community is that the Town adopts the stretch code which Acton has done.

Mr. Keene stated that he has looked at the DOER website and reviewed some of the comments submitted, some are short some are long and detailed; he defers to Mr. Friedman to draft comments to be submitted.

Upon query by Mr. Hudson, both Mr. Ramsbottom and Mr. Barbadoro will help with additional ammunition for drafting comments to the DOER.

Ms. Cady will contact DOER regarding adoption of stretch code, when comments are due, find out if the code automatically renews or if Town Meeting needs to vote on it again and ask what happens if the Town chooses to go back to the 2009 code or go with the 2012 code.

MINUTES

Mr. Keene moved to approve the minutes of December 16, 2013, Mr. Hudson 2nd; unanimous.

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION PROGRAM (BMP)

Mr. Charter reported that he did receive the memo from the Board of Selectmen in support of the BMP. He would like to make the BMP pitch at the department head staff meeting scheduled on January 29; in the mean time he will send an email to all department heads this week asking them to nominate team leaders in their building and/or department. Later he will email all town employees with the chosen poster, cover letter and hints on how employees can work towards using less energy in order for the Town to hopefully meet the remaining 6% of the goal of a total 20% reduction in energy consumption.

The Board discussed suggestions regarding how employees can modify their behaviors with simple things like turning the computer monitors off when not at their desks for extended periods of time. Mr. Charter reported that he is investigating the purchase of fleece lap blankets to disperse among all employees prior to dropping the standard heat temperature; one of the common issues is multiple employees with personal space heaters and tripping circuit breakers. Accommodations will certainly be made for those with true health issues that might need supplemental heat.

Mr. Charter also reported that the Acton Garden Club has created a kiosk addressing climate change which has been moved to the lobby at Town Hall and previously displayed at the Library; the Garden Club wishes to circulate it to other public locations.

SOLAR LANDFILL UPDATE

Mr. Charter reported that the landfill solar facility went on line producing electricity on December 30th; Pelleverde Capital LLC will be the vendor that payments will be made to. Some of the power produced by the facility will be sold to the Waste Water Treatment Plant; it will be important that the Town gets the money transferred back to support what his budget expends. It is expected that the Pelleverde invoices will start coming within a month; it will probably take NStar until April to start factoring the net meter credits in their billing process. The Town will be paying ten cents per kWh

and is currently paying NStar seven cents. He has not yet seen any current data to show how much power it is producing per day.

Mr. Charter also reported that he attended a Lions Club meeting, at their request, to update them on the new solar facility.

8:00 **GRANT APPLICATION** - Department of Energy Resources

Mr. Charter reported that the new application is due in March and is finishing the last grant round but has no new information on the upcoming grant.

Ms. Crosby stated that actionable information is in process for the junior high to convert the modular buildings from resistance electric heat to an air source heat pump.

Ms. Smith departed.

ANNUAL TOWN REPORT

Mr. Hudson stated that he would like to edit a few things before submitting.

Mr. Charter noted that the report is past due; any final edits should be sent the Municipal Properties Department on Monday.

ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES

Mr. Charter circulated design plans for the proposed Memorial Library Revolving Doors; he hopes to have it out to bid within the next three months. It is hoped that 90% of the library patrons will use the main revolving door; there will also be two automatic button operated doors provided for wheel and chairs strollers. There has not been a energy calculation done to date but sure to see results in efficiency and comfort.

Next meeting February 10, 2014

8:35 Mr. Keene moved to adjourn, Mr. Loria 2nd; unanimous.



David Keene,
Chair

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**GREEN ADVISORY BOARD
JANUARY 13, 2014
AGENDA**

**ACTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY
486 MAIN STREET - CONFERENCE ROOM
6:30 PM**

1. Review/Discuss - Stretch Code
2. Approve Minutes 12-16-2013
3. Behavior Modification Program
4. Solar Landfill - Update - Online 12/30/31
5. Grant Application with the Department of Energy Resources
6. Discuss - Town Annual Report
7. Energy Conservation Measures - Memorial Library Revolving Door

Next Meeting February 10