

CORNISH & PLAINFIELD ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING  
February 13, 2023, 7-8:30pm  
Cornish Town Offices

**PRESENT:** in-person: Joanna Sharf, Nancy Wightman, Richard Thompson, Fred Weld, Everett Cass, Bob Jordon. Via Zoom: Bill Cable, Dan Poor, Ruth Bassette, Evan Oxenham, Ron Eberhardt, Nick Cohen, Zack Hallock, Dick Gendron and Kathleen Maslan.

**APPROVAL OF JAN. 9 MINUTES:** Joanna moved, Richard seconded and all approved.

**WEATHERIZE 2023:** 22 Cornish and 14 Plainfield residents signed up for the Zoom presentation. Only a few have begun the process. Joanna suggested that we divide up the list and make calls and send emails to encourage participation and offer help if needed. Joanna will coordinate.

**E-BIKES PROGRAM:** Bill and Ruth met with organizers on January 24. Vital Communities will be the sponsor. Towns need to contribute \$150 towards this program. It was recommended to plan a larger energy event in our towns to coincide with e-bike lending program next summer.

**WINDOW DRESSERS: affordable insulating window inserts.** Richard and Bill are gathering information about this program. They attended a volunteer work session last fall and hope to attend another one to learn more about how the window inserts are assembled. There are two local organizations that are promoting the program: the Hanover and Norwich energy committees and COVER. Richard hopes to hear from COVER about whether they will definitely offer the program. The cost to each homeowner for each indoor storm window is about \$20 or \$30, and there is also additional financial assistance available. Discussion about how it would be a good idea to include this program with our weatherize campaign, since NHSaves does not subsidize window replacement. More information can be found at <https://windowdressers.org/>. Richard will keep us informed as he gathers more information, so that we can determine whether it's worthwhile having Cornish host a Window Dressers program or whether we should just piggy-back onto Hanover or COVER's programs.

**EV CHARGER AT SCHOOL:** Richard has requested confirmation in writing from Eric Sandburg of NHEC as to whether NHEC will definitely waive the monthly meter fee and any demand charges if we install EV chargers in the school parking lot using the Fairgrounds' meter and outlets. He will coordinate between NHEC, the Cornish Fair Association, the School and the Selectboard to work out details of using one of the meters and several outlet(s) in the school parking lot for EV chargers. We hope to have the town pay for the EV charging electricity costs (if they remain minimal), or we can also consider installing a credit card machine on the chargers.

**RENOMINATION OF RICHARD THOMPSON FOR A 3 YEAR TERM:** Discussion about when Committee officers' terms begin & end -- January or March? We were all sworn in one year ago in January. It makes most sense to have terms begin right after Town Meeting. Richard's one-year term is ending and Joanna would like to see him renominated for a 3-year term. Nancy moved, Joanna seconded. 3 votes in favor with Fred and Everett abstaining. Motion carries. Joanna will report to Selectboard.

**BUDGET:** Selectboard turned down our budget request, but they have proposed a new line item in the budget that will help pay for mailings and surveys for all the town committees. We should make a request before planning to move forward on mailings.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Treasurer Richard Thompson gave a report on funds remaining from the \$1,000 donation from Laird Klingler. \$289.35 was spent on photocopies and postage for the Solarize 2022 campaign. \$710.65 remains.

**PLANNING BOARD ORDINANCE:** Joanna discussed the Planning Board amendment to the Solar Ordinance, which would require commercial installers to place a bond to cover decommissioning costs in the event the facility owner fails to cover those costs, and also would require proof of adequate insurance to cover accidents and damage. When a site plan for a new commercial solar installation is submitted, the Planning Board will determine an appropriate bond. Joanna questioned Everett Cass (since he is also a member of the Planning Board) about why there was no notice in Connect Cornish about the January 19 public hearing on this topic, and also noted that the public hearing took place on the same evening that we held our Weatherize 2023 Launch Event, which had been planned for a couple months, so no one on the Energy Committee could attend the public hearing. Everett said he was not in charge of that so could not answer those questions. The text of the Zoning Amendment is attached in the Addendum to these minutes. There seemed to be a general consensus that this bond requirement was a good thing. Everett said he got the idea for it from a NY State webinar (recommended by Joanna) about how towns can handle commercial solar installations from start to finish. Everett also said this Zoning amendment was based on the same bond requirement for cell towners. This amendment will be on the March 14, 2023 paper ballot.

**WEATHERIZE TOWN BUILDINGS:** Utility programs offer incentives for weatherizing municipal buildings. Discussion of which Town buildings could benefit from weatherization. The Highway Garage and a second audit for the Town Offices seemed like the best place to start. There is a summary from the Energy Committee in the 2012 Town Report of a MEAP report that covered an audit of town buildings and vehicles. Joanna will talk with Selectboard and Road Agent. Contractors that weatherize town buildings are GDS Associates and Resilient Building Group (this information was courtesy of Bob Eldredge, NHSaves residential weatherize contractor). Andrew Hatch of Lebanon is a good resource (Dec. 2022 minutes). Bob Jordon of Plainfield Energy Committee spoke of a Plainfield grant from L-Chip for repair and upgrading of the

Plainfield town Hall. Joanna will meet with the Selectboard about weatherizing Town buildings and requesting and scheduling an energy audit.

**PORTFOLIO MANAGER:** To be discussed at next month's meeting.

**NEXT MEETING:** March 13, 7pm at Town Offices. Richard will not be at this meeting but Bill Cable will.

**ADDENDUM:**

AMENDMENT NO. 2 to the CORNISH ZONING ORDINANCE:

The Planning Board's Amendment No. 2 adds bonding and security insurance requirements to the performance requirements for commercial solar collection systems.

Specifically, Amendment No. 2 involves the following:

Revise Article VI-B.D to read:

***11. Bonding and Security Insurance – The Zoning Board shall set the form and amount of security that represents the cost for removal and mandated disposal of abandoned commercial solar collection systems in the event that the facility is abandoned and the owner is incapable and unwilling to remove and legally dispose of the solar collection system in accordance with***

***12. Bonding and surety shall be consistent with the provision in the Subdivision Regulations. Furthermore, the Zoning Board shall require the submission of proof adequate insurance covering accident or damage and such insurance coverage shall remain in force until the commercial solar system has been removed and legally disposed of.***

11. ***12.*** Abandonment and Decommissioning – A solar collection system shall be deemed abandoned if operations have ***been*** discontinued for more than 6 months without written consent of the municipality. An abandoned system shall be removed ***and legally disposed of***, and the site restored, within 6 months of abandonment.

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 3 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Cornish Zoning Ordinance?