

Energy Committee

2021

Mission Statement: The Town of Cornish takes local steps to save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. (2007)

This past year, the Cornish Energy Committee focused on finding a location for a large solar array to offset municipal energy use, continued to learn about Community Power Aggregation, held a successful Energy Expo, organized another e-bike loan program, improved our web page, and restarted Portfolio Manager (a spreadsheet program that tracks municipal energy use).

The Energy Committee meets on the 2nd Monday of each month. We welcome new participants. We continue to work on some projects jointly with the Plainfield Energy Committee.

On Earth Day, April 22, 2021, jointly with the Plainfield Energy Committee, we held a Zoom presentation on Community Power, led by Zack Hallock, a former Cornish resident who is now an energy advisor for Competitive Energy Services based in Portland, ME. Community Power Aggregation is a tool that allows municipalities to purchase electricity directly on behalf of their residents. Zack gave an excellent presentation in which he explained very clearly that Community Power helps towns negotiate better rates, stabilize costs, and eventually drive innovation, energy efficiency and renewable energy in ways that can greatly benefit the local community. Cornish residents and some members of the Planning Board attended.

In search of ways to use renewable energy to offset town electricity usage, the Committee looked for suitable locations for a large solar array. On February 13, 2021, Committee members walked the fairgrounds with Wayne Gray, president of the Fair Association, looking for possible sites with good southern exposure. On May 1, 2021, Committee members met with Terry Donoghue of Norwich Solar Technologies, to discuss solar opportunities on the Rte. 120 Fire Station, the Elementary School and the fairgrounds. Finally, the Committee received a very promising proposal for a roof-mounted solar array on the Elementary School from ReVision Energy in August, 2021. The Committee is currently in discussions with the School Facilities Committee to pursue this proposal and present it to the School Board, but it must wait until the school addresses its water quality and roof repair issues first.

At Town Meeting in June, the Committee put forward a warrant article to establish a capital reserve fund for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, starting with \$1,000 to be placed in the fund. This warrant article was voted down by the town.

On Saturday, September 11, 2021, jointly with the Plainfield Energy Committee, we held a very successful Energy Expo. We had 9 vendors, comprising solar energy, heat pumps, weatherizing, financial support, energy advocacy, NHSaves, e-bikes and Community Power. There were at least 12 different e-bike models to try, several electric vehicles on display, including the Ford Mustang Mach-E, and there were 9 different workshops provided. Over 120 people attended.

Our 2nd annual e-bike loan program was held for 3 weeks in September, and culminated at our Energy Expo on September 11.

We started to revitalize our Portfolio Manager file, which tracks town energy usage. When finished, it will be a very useful tool to display areas where energy reduction is needed. We also began the process of updating our web page to include minutes and other information. We continued to publish short informational articles on energy matters under the title of "Did You Know" in Connect Cornish on a regular basis.

Joanna Sharf, Chair
Nancy Wightman
Daniel Poor
Bill Cable
Richard Thompson
Doug Heaton
Dick Gendron