

**Green Task Force
Minutes of February 25th, 2013 Meeting**

To: Patricia H. Strauss, Town Clerk
Westport, Connecticut

Members Present: David Mann, Robby Gershowitz, Steve Edwards, Pippa Bell Ader, Zack Pensak, Jeff Baer, George Masumian, Bruce Haymes, Hal Kendig

Members Absent: Wendy Batteau, Cathy Talmadge, Steve Smith

Guests: Jonathan Steinberg (State Representative)

David Mann called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

The minutes from the January 28th meeting were approved unanimously after corrections were made.

David Mann updated the Task Force on the ongoing relationship with CEFIA. The Task Force discussed CEFIA's role in promoting C-PACE around town, and agreed to contact them to identify if they have a list of pre-approved contractors for the program, or if the Task Force has to vet possible contractors. The Task Force also agreed that the wording of the contract states that the Green Task Force is not responsible for any contractor, they are only recommending one.

Pippa Bell Ader then updated the Task Force about the Neighbor to Neighbor Home Energy Challenge. Pippa announced that 17 HES visits were completed in February, and that 663 HES visits had been completed since the program had started. Pippa then discussed the possibility of the Neighbor to Neighbor program being extended from ending in April to June. Pippa also told the Task Force that she had requested the e-mail addresses of all of the participants of the Neighbor to Neighbor program to start a Green Task Force e-mail list. If the participants do not want to receive these e-mails, they have the option to opt-out.

The Task Force then discussed what rewards to purchase with the points awarded from the Neighbor to Neighbor Home Energy Challenge. It was agreed that if the Task Force purchased either the recycling bins for schools or an electric vehicle, appropriate signage would be put on them. The Task Force then discussed if it would make sense to buy recycling bins for some public school classrooms, and it was decided that Pippa would reach out to Rob Woosley, the Public Schools Facilities Manager, for his input. The Task Force then unanimously approved a motion to purchase the following items in priority order: 1) an electric utility vehicle, 2) recycling bins, 3) a charging station, and 4) solar streetlights. The motion was contingent upon having an appropriate place to put the charging station and having an appropriate place to put the solar streetlights.

The Task Force then discussed the Solarize Westport program. Pippa Bell Ader reported that 40 of the people who purchased solar panels already had a HES visit and that 90% of the people who looked into purchasing solar panels already had a HES visit. Pippa also announced that there had been some bumps in the road with Encon, and some of the applications had been "hung up", but overall the program went smoothly. Pippa also announced that she had contacted Encon to have a wrap up party on April 28th, but had not heard back from Encon yet. There was then some debate as to whether having a party would be the best idea, and there was an overall sense that many people did not like the idea of having a party because the Task Force would rather focus its energy on people who wanted to purchase solar panels but did not, rather than people who already purchased solar panels. David Mann said that he would forward on Bruce's

questions for a Solarize completion survey, and that he would like feedback on the questions by next week. Jeff Baer then mentioned to the Task Force about the national partnership between Honda and Solar City, where anyone buying an electric vehicle at a Honda dealer would be referred to get solar panels. David Mann then agreed that he would look into this. The Task Force then discussed possible ways to highlight the houses that had purchased solar panels through the program by creating a collage of all the houses or by having a virtual inspection of all of the cumulative energy saved through the program. The Task Force also discussed trying to get the solar homeowners involved in the Green Task Force by inviting them to future meetings.

The Task Force then discussed C-PACE legislation. It was suggested that the language of the bill be fixed regarding property tax and different energy types by using other state's legislation as a model. David Mann and Jeff Baer also announced that they were going to meet with Lisa Grey.

Pippa Bell Ader then talked to the Task Force about the Connecticut Strategic Energy Plan that will be addressed at a March 7th legislative public hearing. Pippa talked about the proposal for oil customers to pay into an energy efficiency fund and the proposed incentive to give homeowners a \$500 tax credit for converting from oil to natural gas. Several members of the Task Force then signed postcards supporting the Plan to mail to legislators.

David Mann then updated the Task Force on the status of the various PPA proposals around town. Of the 6 Z-REC proposals that Westport put in, most of the proposals were ranked in the top. David also announced that a draft of the school solar proposal was recently sent to a reviewer. The Task Force then discussed various issues regarding solar panels including PPAs vs. bonding, the issues regarding pitched and flat roofs, and net metering.

The Task Force then discussed ways to better promote the Task Force and the outcome of the Solarize program. It was suggested that Zack Pensak and Robby Gershowitz work on writing articles for local media and creating social media campaigns to popularize the Solarize program. It was also discussed if a journalism student from Inklings, the Staples High School newspaper, could write about and be present at the Task Force meetings.

The Task Force then discussed local events and outreach to the community. The Wild and Scenic Film Festival on March 15th at the Westport Women's Club had requested our help with publicity for the event, and it was discussed about possibly partnering with them. Club Green's Earth Day event on April 28th was also briefly discussed as a venue to promote at. David Mann reported that the February event went moderately well with approximately 60 people in attendance, and 14 people at the reception at Bobby Q's following the event. Pippa Bell Ader then reminded the Task Force that the Westport Public Schools would be participating in Earth Hour on March 23rd, and suggested that there be a reminder of the event in the PTA bulletins.

Members of the Task Force then talked about what they wanted to see done in the future, and what they wanted the Task Force to get involved in. Various issues regarding awareness, publicity, outreach, and expansion were all brought up.

David Mann adjourned the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

Submitted by:

David Mann
Chair

Robby Gershowitz
Secretary