

**Green Task Force
Minutes of March 27th, 2013 Meeting**

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

Members Present: David Mann, Robby Gershowitz, Cathy Talmadge, Steve Smith, Pippa Bell Ader, Hal Kendig, Steve Edwards, Zack Pensak

Members Absent: Wendy Batteau, Jeff Baer, George Masumian, Bruce Haymes

Guests: Mike Aitkenhead (WTF/Club Green), Sev Duvall (Sound Solar Systems)

David Mann called the meeting to order at 7:35pm

The minutes from the February 25th minutes were unanimously motioned to be approved by e-mail, if there were no objections to the minutes by next week, they would be considered approved.

Pippa Bell Ader updated the Task Force on the Neighbor to Neighbor Home Energy Challenge. She announced that as of the meeting, 673 HES visits and 85 upgrades had been completed, resulting in approximately \$45,000 in rewards points. Pippa also reported that several of the schools that were surveyed were continuing to separate plastics and papers despite the single-stream recycling, and that the bottles at Staples High School were being thrown away because students were putting food waste in the recycling. It was then discussed if the bottles at the schools could be taken each night and redeemed for money. At Staples Club Green would redeem the bottles, and at the middle schools the PTA would redeem the bottles. It was then suggested that the Task Force look into finding a recycling center that would purchase the bottles in bulk before further discussion continued. From Pippa's result, there was a sense of the meeting not to purchase recycling bins for the schools. It was agreed that the priority order for the rewards is 1) an electric utility vehicle, 2) an EV charging stations, and 3) solar streetlights. It was then briefly discussed where the solar streetlights would go, and the locations suggested were Town Hall, Parker Harding Plaza, and the Train Station. It was also suggested that the EV charger be located at the beach or downtown. It was then unanimously approved that Steve Edwards decide where to locate the solar streetlights and the EV charger.

David Mann then updated the Task Force on solar projects for town and school facilities. David announced that the RFP for Staples had been compiled and sent to Nancy Harris after the first meeting, but have not gotten a second meeting or a follow-up from Nancy. Since the date needed to get the RFP in by had passed, it cannot be put in for the auction this year, and therefore must wait until next year's auction. David also announced that the proposals the town had put in are doing well, with 4 out of the 6 proposals being highly rated, and 60% receiving a bid. The total output of the systems would be approximately 285 kW, at roughly 7 cents per kW.

The Task Force then had a conference call with Ty Jagerson from Village Power Finance. Ty talked to the Task Force about energy efficiency projects and solar projects financed by the community. The target of the program would be bigger businesses and non-profit organizations that could get people within to invest in the projects that care about the community. Ty said that the reason this model is profitable is because the investors are within the community and have a vested interest in the project. The returns on the solar projects were approximately 3%-8%. Ty reiterated that in addition to the direct benefit of energy dependence and savings from the solar panels, another benefit is that exposure to solar projects yields comfort with solar panels and

ultimate creates more solar projects around town. After the call, the Task Force then discussed whether there is enough demand for projects like this. The Task Force then suggested the new YMCA as a possible site, and David Mann agreed to get in contact with them.

David Mann then briefly updated the Task Force on C-PACE. He said that the Task Force could not do anything until the legislation progressed in the Senate/House.

Mike Aitkenhead then updated the Task Force about Westport GreenDay on April 28th. The event is to be run by Club Green, and will showcase all of the environmental organizations in town and the progress that they have made. Earthplace, Aspetuck Land Trust, the Wakeman Town Farm, the Westport Public Library, and the Westport Cinema Initiative had all agreed to participate in the event. The Task Force agreed to have a table at Earthplace to present all of the things they have done, will provide signage, will help with publicity, and will help with the movie panel at Town Hall. The Task Force then discussed the possibility of getting a giant map of all of the houses that participated in the Solarize program to hang in town hall, and Steve Edwards and Robby Gershowitz agreed to look into it.

Pippa Bell Ader then updated the Task Force on the Wild and Scenic Film Festival. An e-mail had been sent out prior to the event that helped boost the attendance, but the attendance was only moderate. Pippa received 3 HES visit sign-ups and some good press on the event.

The Task Force then discussed events for the future. David Mann announced that he was finalizing the details on bringing environmental films to town for a showing, in addition to possibly getting a speaker. The event would be in conjunction with Clean Water Action and the Westport Cinema Initiative, and would take place at Town Hall or outdoors at Earthplace. Steve Smith announced to the Task Force that the ribbon cutting for the solar chargers and solar panels at the train station would be from 1-2pm on April 1st, and invited the Task Force to attend. Zack Pensak announced that the Electric Vehicle Rally will be held on April 27th. David Mann then talked about the possibility of doing an event with the Aspetuck Land Trust in May.

Zack Pensak then announced to the Task Force that he had no luck getting a reporter from Inklings to cover the Green Task Force meetings. The Task Force then discussed whether or not it was important to get stories in the newspaper and whether the Task Force should offer to pay a reporter to write stories for the newspaper that the Task Force would feed to them.

David Mann adjourned the meeting at 9:24pm.

Submitted by:

David Mann
Chair

Robby Gershowitz
Secretary