

Williamsburg Energy Committee Minutes for March 21, 2022

Members Present: Neal Anderson, Dick Guzowski, Mimi Kaplan, Jim Piermarini (Chair)

Others Present: Paul Wetzel

Called to Order: 5:30 PM

Minutes: Minutes from February 14 meeting approved unanimously.

Municipal Vulnerability and Public Safety Complex Building: Paul Wetzel, a member of a group exploring an application for a Municipal Vulnerability Grant for the PSC Building, gave background on the effort. (The group also includes Selectman Bill Sayre as well as Sally Loomis and Gaby Immerman.) He described an expression of interest that his group had submitted for the grant and the feedback that was received in response, and explained that the solicitation for full grant proposals was released last week with a May 7 deadline. He provided some suggestions for roles that the Energy Committee could play in this effort, including assistance with securing cost estimates for emergency power, and asked for the Energy Committee's thoughts.

A lengthy discussion ensued, including questions from WEC about timing vis-à-vis the current stage of the bidding process on the PSC, whether funds for energy efficiency can be requested, and whether the MVP might support other features that were not included in the PSC design or were eliminated at some point. There was considerable discussion of requesting funds for a PV system—including storage—which was not part of the bids that have been requested for the PSC (which will otherwise be “solar ready”). Guzowski suggested the possibility of a structure in the parking lot that could house solar panels on its roof and provide protection for vehicles parked outside the PSC building. It was agreed that a PV system with storage would directly increase the resilience of the PSC, would align with broad climate resilience goals (mentioned in the RFP) that are shared by WEC, Green Communities, and the State of Massachusetts, and would help to buffer the town against what can be expected to be increasing—and increasingly volatile—energy costs.

The discussion concluded with a summary of ways the Energy Committee can support this grant — e.g. assistance with the RMAT Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool (whose use is required in MVP grant proposals), potential PV system estimates (including storage), letter of support — and next steps.

Energy Committee Web Page: The Committee authorized Anderson to make first pass on a long overdue updating of the WEC web page, incorporating suggestions made so far by committee members. Going forward, the web page will be updated incrementally as per Committee input.

Town Electricity Aggregation: Update and discussion tabled until next meeting.

Adjourned: 6:45 PM.

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, April 11 at 5:30 PM (tentative)