

Williamsburg Energy Committee Minutes for September 19, 2022

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

Others Present: Bill Sayre (PSCBC Co-Chair); Dan Bonham and Mary Dudek (PSCBC members); Kim Boas and Charles Dudek (former Energy Committee Members)

Called to Order: 5:30 PM

Minutes: Minutes from August 22 meeting approved unanimously.

MVP Grant for Public Safety Complex: Bill Sayre, vice-chair of the PSCBC, introduced himself and pointed out that he is attending as an interested citizen and is not representing the PSCBC. He noted that another citizen had wondered why, in the current plan, a propane tank remains for heating the water for radiant heating of the slab with everything else electric. His understanding, from the architect, was that other options were too costly. He also noted that in the last PSCBC, the committee approved \$5500 for the architect to hire a consultant to help define the PV component of the PSCBC (considering roof mounting, canopy mounting on a vehicle port, or pole mounted). Sayre asked to hear the WEC's thoughts on other options for heating the slab at this point.

Maynard expressed his expectation that there is an all-electric (heat pump) solution to the slab heating, and that it would be cost ineffective and otherwise undesirable to go ahead at this point with a boiler. Piermarini added that the MVP funding for PV shifts the conversation since the PV will supply more of the building's electricity needs and thus make an electric solution to the radiant slab heating more feasible. Maynard expressed his sense that the heat load is not particularly high for this building, emphasizing that this is a quantitatively answerable question and that engineers supported by the project would naturally be the ones to perform the associated calculations. He strongly encouraged exploration of all feasible options, including geothermal heating, acknowledging that it is late in the game. Guzowski wondered if an electric slab heating system could be installed now and fed off the grid until the MVP-enabled PV electricity source became available later. Kaplan similarly wondered if a geothermal could be installed later, and Maynard indicated that this would require a site plan analysis.

A number of related issues related to the PSCB and the MVP-supported energy enhancements arose in the discussion, including the status of the decision to include the slab heating by the PSCBC, the PV system, project management and decision authority, EV readiness, and public outreach.

Regarding the status of the decision to include the heated slab in the equipment bay, Sayre noted that this is regarded as a best practice and that his sense that it has come to be

considered as a must for the PSCB. He stated that the current plan is to install the tubing in the slab and cover the associated cost under existing project funds. Bonham noted that the heated slab was not in the original plan and that the associated energy load has significant implications for the overall system design. Sayre asked Bonham if he had a recommendation of the fastest, cleanest way to go forward on the slab heating. Bonham noted that having \$1.8M may eliminate the barriers that existed in the earlier discussion, including updating of the grid system. Sayre warned that any significant delays would likely be problematic.

Regarding the PV system, there was further discussion of canopy and ground mount solar and of a canopy over the full parking vs a car port. The question arose as to whether some of the solar could be on a different site for net metering. Kaplan will reach out to the MVP regional coordinator to see if locating the solar elsewhere is an option. There was also discussion of battery storage, both in terms of its importance for key objective of resilience and the complexity it adds to the electrical system.

Regarding MVP grant management and decision authority, the question arose of in town is responsible for overall management the MVP grant. Bonham noted the value of having a single point person that would keep all interested parties on the same page. Sayre noted that a project manager is to be hired with MVP funds, and that this manager and Administrator Caccamo will manage the grant day-to-day while the PSCBC will have decision authority. Anderson asked if, going forward, the PSCBC or WEC would be able to interact with the consulting engineer consultant retained to analyze PV options, or if that person would simply issue a report to the architect. Sayre noted that the Town should be informed of the engineer's findings, that direct communication with the architect should go through Chair Mathers, and that it is important that things proceed systematically and through the appropriate channels. There was discussion of the energy committee helping to facilitate the process and present proposals to the PSCBC, with approval of the PSCBC chair and architect. Bonham offered to have an informal discussion with the architect about how this could work and, more generally, about ways to grease the wheels.

Regarding EV readiness, Piermarini noted that EV chargers may become essential sooner than many expect. Sayre noted that the architect has including conduit for EV charger in the project plans.

Regarding public outreach, Charles Dudek suggested that the MVP grant — down to individual line items — be made public. Sayre noted that public outreach is indeed part of the MVP grant, and expressed support for making this information readily available. There was discussion of putting the grant on the Town web site and linking to it from the WEC web page. There was also discussion of setting up a kiosk to distribute information at the building site and also distributing grant information at the transfer station.

On a related topic, Mary Dudek recalled earlier discussions with the new WEC about electric energy consumption concerns at the school. Anderson noted that this is a concern beyond the WEC, and encouraged outreach to other interests in Town about these issues.

Adjourned: 6:50 PM.

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, October 17 at 6:30 PM