

DATE: June 25, 2021
TIME: 8:54 AM

**Belmont Energy Committee Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2021**

Present: Marty Bitner, James Booth, Travis Franck, Brian Kopperl, Don Mercier, Greg Piotrowicz, Alex Thurston, Roger Wrubel.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Marty Bitner.

1) Presentation regarding the proposed development at McLean

Guests: Jack Dawley (Northland), Macie Konieczny and Kelsey Powers (New Ecology)

It was noted that the Planning Board will review the proposal over the course of several months, and will be looking for comments from town committees including the EC.

Jack Dawley asks that we reconvene after we have had the chance to evaluate and provide written comments to the Planning Board.

Mr. Dawley presented some of the key features of the proposed development as related to the EC's mandate. These included:

- Subdistrict A: townhouses (38). Subdistrict B: multifamily rental units (112)
- For Subdistrict A:
 - o each garage space will be EV ready
 - o heating/cooling will be provided by individual air source heat pumps
 - o units will have heat pump water heaters (HPWH)
- For Subdistrict B:
 - o They are looking at a central gas system for providing hot water
 - o They are exploring PV
 - o 10% of common parking spaces will have EV charging stations

There was a question about running wiring (if not necessarily installing chargers right away) to more of the parking spaces in anticipation of future increased penetration of EVs. Mr. Dawley expressed that he thought that sounded reasonable.

Ms. Powers discussed that their findings are that the market has largely accepted all-electric buildings, with 20 sold since last May. Focus groups reveal:

- No issues with having heat pumps
- Not much knowledge on heat pump water heaters (some complaints around noise)
- Induction stoves are a mixed bag
- Solar PV on townhouse roofs gets a poor response, due to aesthetic concerns

There was discussion about the issue of water heating in Subdistrict B. While HPWH are planned for the townhouses, it is difficult to fit these in the rental units because of the space required for each. It was noted by Mr. Konieczny that a central heat pump water heater from Mitsubishi is coming to market. In response to a question about whether such a heater could be “dropped in” to replace a planned central gas heater if it became available soon, he replied that that would be easy to do.

Re: solar PV, it was proposed that there be at least some PV installed on townhouses to ease the path for first adopters. Mr. Dawley noted that there is a law that condo associations cannot prohibit solar installations, though they can regulate them.

There were some questions about the orientation of buildings; Mr. Dawley noted that the proposed configuration of buildings, with lower heights (3 instead of 4 stories), was partly motivated by the goals of achieving appropriate scale to abutting buildings, and considerations of visibility from Waverly Square. With the long east-west linear roof surface there will be a large area of roof well that could house either condensers for the air source heat pumps or solar panels.

There was a question about the very low estimated cost of cooling relative to that for heating; it was explained that this resulted from a much larger heating load in our climate coupled with higher COPs for heat pumps at the higher temperatures of cooling season.

Mr. Konieczny noted that a zero-carbon code is being talked about but such a code wouldn’t be in place until 2024, and that the current proposed development will exceed the requirements of the current stretch code (HERS rating of 55).

A working group of Brian, Greg, James, and Roger was struck to assemble comments on the proposal to bring to the next EC meeting.

2) Approval of March Minutes

The minutes from the March 17 2021 meeting of the Energy Committee were approved unanimously.

3) Next Generation Roadmap incentives and tax breaks

Alex will send information about this around for discussion at the next EC meeting.

4) Reports

Chenery solar

Phil Thayer noted that LBAC was told that Sunbug is adjusting the installation to comply with Belmont’s setback requirements.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM by Marty Bitner.