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Town of Belmont Energy Committee
January 8, 2014 Meeting Minutes

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Attending: Andy Healy, Ian Todreas, Lauri Mancinelli, Jacob Knowles, Roger Colton, Christine McVay, Jan Kruse, and Gerry Boyle and Jeff Roth (guests).

8:05 AM: Co-chair Ian Todreas opened the meeting. He suggested that we move our monthly meeting date to the second Wed. of each month so that Andy Healy could attend regularly. Jan Kruse suggested Ian contact absent members to ensure that they could make that date before we officially moved the date. Ian agreed to do so. That said, all present agreed to have the next meeting on Feb. 12, the second Wed. of Feb.

Next on the agenda was review of the Nov. 2013 minutes. Jan Kruse presented them, which included amendments by Ian and Tony Barnes. Chris McVay moved to approve, Andy Healy seconded and minutes were approved unanimously.

The committee then welcomed guest Jeff Roth, chair of the Belmont Community Path Advisory Committee. Jeff gave an introduction and background on the community path. Belmont is the missing link in connecting the rail trail with nearby communities (Waltham and Cambridge). The committee is looking at various options for a path based on a variety of criteria; they are doing a quantitative analysis using specific criteria). He noted they've done community outreach through a survey monkey public survey. The desire to have the path serve families was an important result of the survey so a safe trail for kids and families is very important. Based on that, the committee is looking at as many off-road possible routes as they can. The Energy Committee can help in that the path promotes safe access to commuter rails and reduced carbon emissions by encouraging walking and biking through town. He asked if the Energy Committee would draft a letter to the Belmont Board of Selectmen and copy the CPAC committee supporting the path, preferably an off-road option. Discussion ensued. Chris McVay made the motion for the committee to draft a letter of support for an off-road community path to the BOS. Andy Healy seconded and it was approved unanimously. Gerry Boyle suggested that the committee letter, if approved, should suggest the concept of an off-road path without recommending a specific route. All agreed with this suggestion. Roger also noted that some town employees on the Energy Committee might prefer to be listed as present rather than signing on to the letter so as not to be seen as a conflict of interest. He volunteered to contact those absent (Glenn Clancy, Peter Castanino and Fred Domenici) to see if they would like to be listed in that manner. Lauri offered to draft a letter to send to the committee for review by Monday. Roger cautioned that changes should go directly to Lauri and not the entire group so the Open Meeting Law was not violated. Roger also suggested that the Energy Committee might wish to volunteer to work with other town committees to integrate community path into their plans as appropriate, and that the Energy Committee might volunteer to work to make our commuter rail stations a destination for those taking the bike path to beef up ridership for Belmont commuter rail stations.

Next, Ian brought up Sagewell and Solarize Belmont initiatives. He noted that Sagewell has offered to create a central web-based portal on residential energy initiatives that could work as a one-stop shop for all related community programs (including BMLD and Sustainable Belmont's Solarize Belmont initiatives). This web-based portal would replace our current Better Homes Belmont website and contain more information. The URL would remain the same. Lauri noted that to ensure that the portal is up-to-date, we might want to simply include links to BMLD and SB initiatives. Gerry Boyle also suggested adding a glossary of terms. Jan moved that we move forward with working with Sagewell on a central web-based portal; Chris McVay seconded and it was approved unanimously.

Ian also noted that we reached our goal of having 1,000 home energy assessments in one year (by year-end 2013). Applause broke out within the group.

Roger Colton reported that the planning board had approved of the Wellington solar panels this past Monday night at its meeting.

Green Community application. Jan noted that it's moving forward for application in the fall of 2014. Ian attended a meeting with the Belmont Board of Selectmen and the BOS unanimously approved moving forward.

Town Energy Manager. Ian noted that Amanda Mujica had sent notice of a state RFP for a grant that would subsidize towns to hire an energy manager. Ian had sent an email to Ralph Jones but had not heard back. Jan suggested a follow-up email to Mark Paolillo since he is the BOS chair and that all BOS members should be copied. Ian said he would do that.

Gerry Boyle gave an update on the pool replacement on the Underwood pool and that the committee was working on schematic designs and that there was a meeting scheduled for Jan. 9. Jake asked how to be involved to check whether net-zero energy would be included in the design. Gerry suggested that Jake contact Anne Paulsen who is chair of that committee.

9:05am: Ian adjourned the meeting.