

Moretown Energy Group
Draft Informational Meeting Notes
Thursday, June 3, 2010
6:30 – 8:30 pm

The Moretown Energy Group met on Thursday, June 3, 2010 at 6:30 pm to hear about a proposal to install solar panels on a municipal site behind the elementary school and to discuss how the Energy Group should approach planning for a renewable energy future in Moretown.

Present were selectboard members Stephanie Venema, John Hoogenboom and David Van Deusen; Planning Commission members Don Larocca, Jonathan Siegel and Rube Scharges; Energy Committee members Karen Horn, John Schmeltzer; Dick Valentinetti, Jack Byrne, Maxine Grad, Bridgette Remington as well as Moretown residents Denise Sanders, Rita LaRocca, Caroline Strauss, Kirk Postlewaite, Elly Hilferty; and Encore Redevelopment Principal Chad Farrell.

Karen Horn called the meeting to order at 6:30 and described previous activities of the Moretown Energy Group as well as the intention to develop a long range plan for renewable energy in Moretown in concert with the capital budgeting committee and planning commission. She stated that Chad Farrell of Encore Redevelopment had been approached about including Moretown in a proposal to site solar panels on municipal property behind the elementary school through a lease purchase arrangement that would take advantage of state and federal tax credits for investors in solar energy.

Chad Farrell presented a proposal and answered questions from the audience. Encore redevelopment has developed a model for smaller solar projects of up to 160 kilowatts (kw) per year, which would qualify for an expedited permit process at the Public Service Board. Pursuant to this model, private investors would invest in the project, which Encore Redevelopment would develop and lease to a town that had a suitable site for a solar array. The town would need to lease the infrastructure and maintain it, then purchase the equipment in years 7 – 10 at a fair market value. Lease payments (including operations and maintenance, insurance and an inverter for the equipment) would be balanced against the costs of the electricity. (See attached information from Encore Redevelopment). During the period of the lease, Encore as owner owns any liability. Once the town purchased the equipment, the town would own the liability.

The State of Vermont has made available \$9.4 million in solar tax credits, which when coupled with federal tax credits create a favorable investment climate for private individuals. A solar array needs to be connected to the grid in order to qualify for the tax credits and the electricity generated therefrom would feed into the grid. The tax credits are set to expire on December 31, 2010 but will be very popular and so in order to be considered for a portion of the state tax credit, proposals need to be in sooner rather than later.

Meeting participants asked many questions about financing, advantage to the town, sites in town, liability, timelines and levels of commitment required from the town. The most desirable site from the point of view of solar energy production is at the school septic site, which participants

felt was an inappropriate site for other reasons. The lack of a site was considered a significant limitation for this proposal. Chad Farrell agreed to provide more information regarding the proposal to the town (information attached).

The Moretown Energy Group did not make any recommendation regarding this particular proposal but did indicate that more information regarding the feasibility of such a project in Moretown was desirable. The group also expressed strong interest in investigating potential for renewable energy in Moretown regardless of whether or not this particular proposal is considered timely.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Karen Horn
Moretown Energy Coordinator
Moretown Energy Group
June 7, 2010*