

— Regarding Ashley Forest, Susan H. had a follow-up conversation with David Paganelli who sounded receptive to volunteers helping with invasives, and she identified a half a dozen people who would be willing to give one Saturday a month starting in the spring to do hand-pulling. Barberry is evidently the biggest concern there.

Dorian has been talking with two people who have had success with non-chemical elimination of invasives in our region. Question: Maybe we could host a webinar with one or both of them?

— Discussion of a open-house event on January 14, 10 a.m. to noon, at Matt’s house, which has roof-mount solar, EV, heat pump (coming, but may not be installed by January), and induction stove to demonstrate; also looking into wood-fired boiler.

Dorian asked about winter-accessible trackers in town: along Justin Morrill Highway: Susan Grady (who also has an electric car and heat pump), June Solsaa, and Jason Loomis. **ACTION ITEM: David** will ask Susan Grady if she’d like to participate in the January 14 home visits; Jim offered to help her host, if she says yes.

3. IREC report: No report this month; Kyle Katz has taken over the coordinator role at TRORC.

4. Strafford Net Zero by 2030 Education Campaign and Strategy: Dorian was thinking about how we could more visibly communicate our goals and successes as we work on meeting our goals. Dorian proposes that we ask the Coburns if they’d be willing to designate an area of shelving for climate-sensitive products (100% recyclable paper products; laundry sheets (of Fels-Naptha) instead of liquid detergent; shampoo bars; veggie bar oil; biodegradable packaging; etc.). We could then promote a shop-local choice, instead of driving to the co-ops. And we could track what the sales have been and potentially even what miles driven have been avoided. **ACTION ITEM:** Dorian will go and speak with the Coburns about this idea.

5. Related, David’s plastic-recycling “sausage-making” education project: David circulated a Greenpeace report on the impossibility of genuine plastic recycling, including shipping of plastic waste to overseas sites where it’s burned. Could we track the materials that leave our recycling center to their end-reuse destinations (or destruction)? “Follow the bottle or jug . . .” We could make a map for where it goes. What are ways we can increase awareness of the impacts of plastics? And highlight the alternatives that are already there in the store, including eggs in cartons produced locally; milk in glass bottles. **ACTION ITEM: Jim** will send to our committee the recycling guidelines that Michael Scanlan sends out to Recycling volunteers. Could we create a lively, informative, and clear poster (and handout version) helping people know some principles of consumer materials (i.e., aluminum is more likely to actually be recycled than glass or plastic, etc.).

6. Forests book club: Dorian reported that the most recent book they read was very sobering and “all about nuance.” Another reminder that we need to find ways to advance on our town resolution.

Discussion of solar in our town followed. Susan T. reminded us that Matt had pointed out that if we count the Elizabeth Mine (20 acres, 7 megawatts of solar), that provides far more solar than our community uses, especially combined with the forests we have as carbon sinks. But that site doesn’t just supply Strafford’s needs. When we worked on the Enhanced Energy Plan, we calculated that Strafford would need 20 acres of solar to reach net-zero. The new community solar array on Alger Brook is 1 acre.

A typical home needs 60 kilowatts to meet all needs, so ground-mounted solar is needed in addition to the roof; a typical roof array would only supply about 8 kilowatts, on a good site.

Doc reminded us that we can't just speak about production of energy to meet our goals; we haven't fully figured out how to account for conservation, nor for carbon sequestration through cover crops and soils management in agriculture (as at Rock Bottom Farm) and forests.

David pointed out there there will be quite a lot of migration northward, so Strafford could have double the population. How can we ensure that new buildings have technologies that we want to see for the next forty years. "I'm counting my blessings: I'm glad that the IRA was passed and will help us move in the right direction, but we need a wartime effort, which most people haven't grasped."

Sub-committee and other reports: monthly updates, if any:

Transportation: David said he hasn't been pushing EVs lately, because it hasn't been a good time for purchasing used vehicles, and new ones won't be available till the coming year.

Weatherization / home heating / construction: Matt continues to meet with the Building Code group, but with a change in the IREC staffing they've been treading water. The issue continues to be how to encourage since towns have little ability to enforce. Matt plans to write some postings for our list-serve: Best practices for home choices, including for appliances and heat sources.

Community Solar/renewables: Doc reported that everything is in place except for the wiring to the grid, the inverter, and a piece of electronic equipment called a "combiner" that is backordered potentially until the spring; solar installations across Vermont are waiting for these. Doc had a discussion with Catamount and the Law School Energy Clinic about extending the one-year period for members.

Legislative report: Susan Hodges reported that she has continued to meet with several people in Thetford, including Stuart Blood who has done so much research regarding the "Clean Heat Standard," "Renewable Energy Credits" (RECs) and "Renewable Natural Gas" (RNG). They have recently had meetings with Rebecca Holcomb and with Jim Masland. Those meetings focused especially on what may be planned for the "Clean Heat Standard" bill that was not passed last session, and on RECs and RNG. They offered to help our representatives with information, since they have no staff, and asked for direction on who to connect with to build more momentum regarding climate change issues in the Vermont House and Senate. Susan says they were well-received by both Rebecca and Jim.

Vermont has the most newly elected people ever, so committee assignments etc. are not yet clear. We do know that there are people who would like to see the Clean Heat Standard bill, without significant changes, be introduced again and passed. The Thetford group, on the basis of all the information they have gathered, feels there should be substantial changes not only to that bill, but to the whole concept of "Renewable Energy Credits," and that "Renewable Natural Gas" should not be accepted as helping us meet our carbon emissions goals.

As a result of those meetings, and based on detailed work by Stuart Blood to gather the information, the Thetford-Strafford constituents group put together a position paper regarding the Clean Heat Standard and the problems that need to be addressed. This is posted to our committee's Google drive, accessible here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X7Yztwp4ccDoz_GSI4SLWdjUxVAOUKzC

350VT is working to bring together many groups and communities so that we can have a united voice when interacting with our legislators here in Vermont and effectively address our carbon emission goals. Susan encourages committee members to subscribe to their updates. On the 350VT website, on the home page, click on "sign up for updates + get involved!"

Adjourned: 8:45 pm Next Meeting: January 10, 2023, 7 pm via ZOOM

Enthusiastically submitted by Jim Schley, Recording Secretary