

ENERGY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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Town of Somers
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

SOMERS TOWN HOUSE
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SOMERS, NY 10589

HERB ORINGEL
CHAIRMAN



MEETING MINUTES

September 5, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. The following members were in attendance: Chairman Herb Oringel, Councilman Rich Clinchy, Mike Blum, Flo Brodley, Frank Maricic, and Rick Warren.

Resident Dan Gadigian and Energy Consultant Jerry Robock were also present. Mr. Gadigian is being interviewed by the Town Board tomorrow evening to become a member of the Committee.

Minutes – Mr. Oringel made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 6, 2012 meeting as submitted. Mr. Blum seconded the motion. All were in favor.

2013 Budget – As requested, the 2013 Budget to cover Mrs. Schirmer's salary was submitted to the Town Supervisor on August 17.

Reduction on Building Permit Fees – In an effort to encourage residents to reduce their energy costs by installing solar and making renewable energy improvements to their homes, a memo was sent to the Town Board requesting their consideration of reducing building permit fees to residents that have processed permits for solar installations and renewable energy home improvements. A copy of a memo dated July 2, 2012 from the Building Inspector to the Town Board was shared. Permit fees per cost of projects for Bedford, Lewisboro and Somers were compared. As Somers had the lowest fees, the Building Inspector saw no reason for the Town of Somers to reduce its fees. All agreed that if Somers offers a discount fee it will send a message to the community that Somers supports solar, even if the discount is only 20%. Most importantly, setting a discount shows that Somers is committed to solar and makes a very positive statement; the permit cost will not deter someone from going solar but

being supported in their effort endears them to the Town. Mrs. Schirmer will survey all the communities in NWEAC as to their policies on installing solar and making renewable energy improvements to their homes and present the results at the October meeting.

Long Island Unified Solar Permit Initiative – The communities in Long Island have joined forces to create the Long Island Unified Solar Permit Initiative, which standardizes the language used in solar permitting. Ultimately the hope is that all of New York will follow suit. NWEAC plans to do the same to create something similar.

Energize Somers – Work continues to come up with ways in which to educate/market to the Town residents and businesses about Energize Somers. Energize NY representative Heather Flournoy has been doing outreach and marketing. There are two Somers residents that have offered their help as well. Mr. Gadigian has helped facilitate a contact with the school PTA's and School Superintendent Ray Blanch is on board to help in any way he can. The Somers Chamber of Commerce is assisting with getting businesses involved.

Roughly 40 to 60 Town residents have completed an application for a NYSERDA audit. About 12 have been completed and retrofitted with the recommended changes. One of which is Ms. Brodley's condo in Heritage Hills. Mr. Oringel's house is being upgraded in October. Mapping and charting will be done to show these statistics. Ms. Brodley has been instrumental in introducing the Heritage Hills residents to the NYSERDA audits. At her request, a meeting was held earlier today with Heather Flournoy and some of the residents in Heritage Hills. Five have submitted their applications for an audit and one is readying for the work to be done. It was suggested that some testimonial articles been written that could be shared with various forms of media to spread the word. Ms. Brodley will write an article about her experience, Mr. Robock about the solar panels that were installed at Somers High School, and Mr. Blum about the Somers Sustainability Action Plan. Ms. Nash has already committed to writing about the envelope house she lives in and her parents built. It would also be nice if the Committee had a dedicated public relations member.

Somers Sustainability Action Plan – Tomorrow evening, Mr. Blum will present the Somers Sustainability Action Plan to the Town Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 3 at 7:00 p.m. at the Recreation Center in Van Tassell Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Somers Energy Environment Committee

cc: Energy Environment Committee

Town Board
Town Clerk