

Town of Deerfield
Board of Selectmen Minutes
January 5, 2011

Present: Mark Gilmore, Carol Ness, John Paciorek – Selectmen
Bernard Kubiak – Town Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

Minutes of the December 29, 2010 were unanimously approved.

Selectmen's Comments: Selectmen's e-board meeting is February 3rd Taylor's Tavern at 6:PM in the very back room.

Board of Health Comments: Just keep washing your hands. There is more flu circulating.

Energy Resource Commission: Present: MA Swedlund, Jay Stryker, and James Barry
The commission is hoping to make the Town a Green Community by passing the stretch code at Annual Town Meeting. James Barry, an employee of the Department of Energy Resources, was present to explain what the Green Communities Act was all about and what the stretch code is.

In 2008 a law was passed that required new construction to be energy efficient. At the same time the building code was being revised. The resulting energy regulation was more stringent than the basic building code, i.e. the code was stretched. The stretch process is similar to energy star for homes. The code is performance based rather than prescriptive. For example, under this system the emphasis is on how well the insulation works, rather than the number of inches thick it is.

Mr. Barry said installation is key to performance. A Home Energy Rating System (HERS) has been developed and people are being trained to do the testing of homes. A house is rated by annualizing energy use for heating, lighting, etc. In new construction the process begins with a review of the plans, then inspections are conducted when the house is ready for sheet rocking. A final inspection is done when the house is complete to see how much air changes in an hour. A concern was raised about houses being built that are too air tight which creates moisture problems. He suggested a whisper jet air exchange fan in a bathroom could help with that problem.

One of the ways in which this process can help people, is that by reducing the amount of energy required, thus reducing cost of living in the home, homeowners with energy efficient homes may qualify for mortgages at reduced rates at some banks. Smaller banks such as Florence Savings Bank and Country Bank are more aware of the availability of these mortgages.

To go forward with this green community designation the town's building official needs to be trained (Deerfield's inspector is trained). A public hearing should be held, and a town meeting vote (majority vote) taken. The program can take affect in either January or July. Once in effect there is a 6 month concurrency period, which means that during the first 6 month period builders may elect to use the stretch code or the "old" base code. After that the stretch code will be the only choice.

64 municipalities across the state have said yes to the stretch code. Mr. Barry said 8.1 million dollars were given away in May, 2010. In terms of size that can be expected, New Salem got \$138,000 and Hatfield got \$130,000. Every town that went green got something. There are several ways to quality, one of which in the five year plan. One town is going to replace all of its

street lights with led lights. Lenox is participating in a program where home owners with a \$2,000 investment can get solar panels put on the roof (Sunrun). A company will come in put solar panels on the roof and sell the homeowner electricity for less than WMECO charges. Since some people don't have enough money to do that, Lenox is putting together a bucket that people can borrow from to get involved.

A potential project in Deerfield suggested by Mr. Kubiak is replacing the roof on the elementary school. A portion of that project will be installation of insulation to reduce energy consumption.

Mr. Barry said Towns can begin by preparing a plan detailing current use. By reducing that use through implementing green technologies the Town would realize a savings, freeing up money for other things. There is also an environmental factor; burning less oil reduces greenhouse gases.

Ms. Swedlund said the commission has been working on the five steps to become a green community. They're working on a solar overlay district and possible solar generation at the landfill. Mr. Kubiak said the energy committee deserves a lot of credit for moving this concept forward. Ms. Swedlund said that Deerfield is one of three Towns whose landfill qualifies for a solar farm on its landfill. Part of the reason is that it is close to transmission lines.

Mr. Paciorek asked about a way for homeowners to put in solar systems. Mr. Barry said the company he mentioned earlier called Sunrun has a program where, for a \$2,000 payment, it will install solar panels on a home and sell the homeowner the electricity generated for a rate less than WMECO charges. They (Sunrun) get the renewable energy credits which are then sold to the power companies (who are required to produce a percentage of green energy each year)..

Mr. Paciorek said there are some issues with solar installations on roofs, created by wind and vibrations. He would be more interested in one on a shed.

Mr. Gilmore asked, what is a solar overlay district? He was told it's a plan that shows areas of town where installing solar panels would be feasible. This would generally areas with several acres where multiple panels could be installed.

The Board was in favor of having the Energy Commission plan an educational public hearing, possibly in late March, to which contractors and other Town boards would be invited.

Special Town Meeting Warrant ; A motion was made by Mr. Paciorek, seconded, by Ms. Ness and unanimously voted to sign the warrants for a special town meeting.

Sewer rates: Mr. Kubiak recommended that the sewer rate be set at \$5.52/ 1,000 gallons, with the minimum fee being \$15.00, a 7% increase over what the rate should have been last year. This rate is based on winter usage. The fees are expected to cover the operating costs. He said last year the Town bought down the rate. Mr. Gilmore said what matters is that people understand where their rates come from. Because last year the decision was to buy down the rate, to the taxpayer this new rate is closer to a 15% increase. He would like to meet Mr. Kubiak to see if the rate can be reduced. A motion was made by Ms. Ness to set a rate not greater than \$5.52/ 1,000. Mr. Paciorek seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously.

Crowley APR Co holders Agreement: The Crowley APR request has finally been finalized and is ready for signing. A motion was made by Ms. Ness, and seconded by Mr. Paciorek to sign the agreement. The vote was unanimous.

License Renewals: Two licenses for renewal are BJ's, a home craft business and L&B's Auto Sales, a new business. A motion was made, seconded and voted to approve them.

Surplus item: The Town has five cords of firewood that Mr. Kubiak asked the Board to declare surplus, so that it could be sold. A motion was made, seconded, and voted to declare the wood as surplus.

Discussion of waving fees; Ms. Ness wanted to wave the fee for a person who has a very small enterprise. She says the Town has been waiving this permit for the past few years. Mr. Gilmore questioned this. She will pull the license.

Public Health Task Force: From meetings that Ms. Ness attends, she has learned about a program to form health districts composed of several towns. She recommended that the Town not participate in it. She also reported that Greenfield is considering accepting a grant to hire a public health person who would be available on a fee for service basis. The first two years would be paid for by the state. She will get copies of the programs for the Board to review.

At 9:34 PM a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and voted.

Respectfully submitted,
Priscilla Phelps