

but they're very busy, so (**FUTURE ACTION:**) we should establish a subcommittee to offer to help the school think through a plan.

ACTION ITEM: Jim will ask Strafford recycling coordinator Michael Scanlan and Ham Gillett at the Upper Valley Solid Waste District for more information about where materials dropped off at the town's recycling center are taken, with particular emphasis on the "commingled" bin., explaining that we would like to better educated people about what really gets recycled. **DONE**

ACTION ITEM: Dorian will send a draft of the committee's annual report for the Town Report to members, with a request that any comments or additions be sent to Jim by Friday, January 20; Jim will finalize this report and send this to editor Nellie Pennington by Monday, January 23. **DONE**

3. Open House report: Twenty visited Matt's house; fewer came to Susan Grady's, but Susan H. and David had good conversations with people at Susan Grady's. Matt noted that no one asked about their electric car.

Matt also did a Webinar presentation for Sustainable Woodstock on the Inflation Reduction Act. This recording can be seen here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nMvABiiC4&t=4s

4. Battery Backup webinar hosted by Thetford Energy Committee:

Subject: What do you do when the power goes out? Battery Backup Webinar: Tuesday, March 28, 5:30-7:00 pm.

Join the Thetford Energy Committee in a discussion of options for battery backup systems. We'll hear from Green Mountain Power, SunCommon, and some residents who have installed a backup system about what options are available for home battery systems, the link to solar, incentive programs, and steps to find more information about what's right for your home.

Please join us, and if you have a battery backup system you love or has disappointed you, please join to share your experience. Topics that will be addressed include:

- * What are the benefits of batteries for me, the grid, and the planet?
- * What can batteries handle during an outage and for how long?
- * How do they work with solar?
- * What are the incentives?
- * How long do they last?
- * How do they compare to a traditional generator?
- * Is my home viable for batteries?
- * How do the GMP's resilient grid [incentive programs](#) work?
- * And of course, how much do they cost and how do I sign up?!

Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83985226873>

Meeting ID: 839 8522 6873 / Passcode: 896071 / To call in: +1 646 558 8656

David reminded us that Green Mountain Power's current promotion is a better option than purchase of expensive individual batteries, since using the Tesla power walls they will lease allows for them to track the offset credits, which individually buying batteries for a home bank doesn't do. Green Mountain Power will be one of the presenters for this webinar.

5. Forestry Workshop ideas: Susan Hodges reported

a. Potential webinar on invasives and forest stewardship:

Susan Hodges will ask David Paganelli if he's available on April 13 or 20 (Thursdays) to lead this Zoom session, which we can record and share. We'd prefer a weekday, 5 to 6 pm.

b. Potential Ashley Community Forest Invasive Plant Work Days

The Ashley Community Forest has several areas with serious invasive plant infestations that threaten the forest and biodiversity, including extensive areas of barberry. If volunteers can successfully pull barberry starting this spring and summer, we can avoid use of herbicides in the forest!

David Paganelli is willing to direct a volunteer effort at manual invasive plant control. Below is the information you need to know:

Saturdays: 4/22, 5/20, 6/17, 7/22, 8/26, 9 AM – 2 PM Bring your own lunch.

Please let Susan Hodges know if you are planning to participate and which dates.

6. Update on Strafford Net Zero by 2030 Education Campaign and Strategy

David received a summary from Michael Scanlan describing how Strafford contracts for recycling:

“The stuff in the big green dumpsters is taken by Casella, consolidated by Casella in White River Junction, then hauled over the mountain to their MRF (Material Recovery Facility) in Rutland. That is just a sorting station which separates out the different materials into bales that can be moved on into the wholesale market for materials. That any of it gets recycled depends on someone being interested in buying the bales for their manufacturing operations.

“The plastic bags we collect get taken to the Hannafords in West Lebanon to be put into their recycling stream. These end up with TREX to be made into plastic decking boards. Strictly speaking, this is downcycling and not recycling, since in 30–40 years something will need to be done with those boards (most likely trash).

“Our scrap metal is taken to Evergreen Recycling on A Street in Wilder. They sort it some and then move it on to some company that melts it down for new metal.

“Our deposit bottles and cans are taken by Vince Robinson to a collection center so that the Strafford Lions can get the nickel deposits. These containers go back to the distributors for the beer/soda companies. What happens to them after that I have no idea.

“Our food scraps go to a farmer in Corinth who has set up a composting operation (or expanded one he had) called Cookeville Compost.

“In terms of household trash, there is no “Transfer Station” in Strafford. That term refers to a place where trash is consolidated and transferred to a big truck to be taken to a landfill. We don't collect trash at Recycling (or don't want to, though people leave lots of trash behind when they come). That is handled in Strafford by separate haulers, for instance Deb Clark of Durkee, to take to the landfill in Lebanon.”

Discussion followed of how to create educational materials that help consumers make better choices. Many products claim to be recyclable or made of recycled or “natural” materials but materials sourcing and processing and follow through is more complex. We could create a poster showing what comes from where and goes where. We could create a game that kids could follow the path.

We can help people prioritize their materials choices: aluminum, for instance, has a value as a material so is more likely to actually be recycled. **ACTION ITEM: Ongoing.**

7. Legislature Report

Susan H. shared a report from Vanessa Rule, 350Vermont:

“H. 320: This bill would require that Vermont generates much more renewable energy from in-state and the New England region in order to reach our reduction goals and to stop exporting the harms of Vermont's energy use. It would require that 60% of Vermont's electricity come from new renewables produced in-state

and the rest of the New England region, would not allow new large hydro to be added to the existing load, and would stop the use of unbundled renewable energy credits from HydroQuebec (which de-incentivize the production of new renewables and is preventing us from reducing greenhouse gas emission.) There is a competing bill H. 289 (that would scale up large hydro and would have minimal impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.)

- There is a [factsheet on the Renewable Energy Standard](#)
- You can [watch Peter Sterling of Renewable Energy Vermont](#) make a 3 min case for this (Peter starts at 1:23:53).
- You can also [watch Representative Caleb Elder](#), sponsor of the bill, make the case in this 3 min video.
- Here are fact sheets about the problems with [Renewable Energy Credits](#) and [Large Hydro](#).

Senate Bill 5 (Affordable Heat Standard) passed the Senate with 19; would need 20 votes to override the expected Governor's veto. Going to the House next week.

Matt feels that some of the criticism on Senate Bill 5 is valid, but believes the bill should be passed; life-cycle accounting for emissions that 350VT had insisted on resulted in good changes. This is the first time we've ever regulated delivered fuel companies (the biggest climate-impacting sector in our state economy), and the incentives for weatherization (which is the cheapest, most potent investment of all) and fuel-switching are transformational, in his view.

Reps. Masland and Holcomb (and the Woodstock rep) have introduced H. 436, which would require Building Code compliance, and some other components (including prohibition of denying solar permits only on aesthetic grounds).

8. Other Sub-committee reports:

—**Community Solar/renewables:** Doc reported that the switching gear has finally come in, and as the snow recedes they'll complete trenching and hookup to pole. Looking at a May–June activation date. David emphasized that supply-chain delays continue to be a big problem.

9. **“Self-healing Asphalt”:** Emerson Gale sent some information to Susan Hodges about this experimental road material. Susan urged him to send this to Jeff Solsaa on the Select board.

10. **Municipal Energy Resilience Program grants: \$4,000 for new initiatives, including town buildings:** <https://bgs.vermont.gov/municipal-energy-resilience-program/>. **ACTION ITEM:** Jenevra urged David Lutz to ask Jeff Grout, the new IREC coordinator, about whether there will be assistance for member towns with applications.

- * Free building energy assessments
- * Up to \$4,000 grants for energy resilience community capacity building
- * Up to \$500,000 grants for building renovation projects for weatherization, thermal efficiency, and supplementing or replacing fossil fuel heating systems with more efficient renewable or electric alternatives.

11. **Inquiry through Town Clerk with request to add link about electric vehicles to the Energy and Climate Committee web page:** Committee chose to not do so; Drive Electric Vermont is already there.

12. **Matt Christie will do a Home Energy seminar for Cabin Fever University:** Tuesday, March 21, 6 to 9 p.m. at the Newton School.

Adjourned: 8:12 pm Next Meeting: April 11, 2023, 7 pm via ZOOM
Enthusiastically submitted by Jim Schley, Recording Secretary