

focused their display on “five things you can do to reduce household waste.” People were especially interested in the laundry sheets.

ACTION ITEM: Matt will be in touch with Eric Reimanis about working with the Newton School on an energy- and climate-related curriculum; **Dorian** will contact school board chair Sarah Root saying the SECC can offer advice and information for energy-efficiency planning. **Report: Dorian talked with Sarah Root. Matt didn’t hear back from Eric.**

3. Update on Independence Day information table. While Dorian was there at the table, she was thinking about how we could assess our progress. Discussion of ways to assess progress: Could we create some kind of survey on who is now using human-powered and/or electric yard tools, EVs and electric bikes in town? Dorian asked Matt about surveying techniques; Matt said that response rate for e-surveys can be very low. Yet people are saying that they now have electric lawn equipment, and you see people using lawnmowers and brush cutters and chainsaws that are electric. These are a much smaller investment than EVs, but they’re generally unregulated for clean-air standards, so they do make a difference. Susan T. said that better than sending people emails, we could have clipboards at the Recycling Center or the store or Town Meeting and just ask people if they are using non–fossil-fuel lawncare gear; we could also do an e-survey. Doc asked if we could involve the Strafford eighth graders in doing the surveying. A survey with five questions would be good.

Potential questions:

1. Are you using hand-powered or electric lawncare equipment? If not, would you consider buying one of these?
2. Do you have an electric vehicle? If not, would you consider buying one?
3. Do you have an e-bike, or are you considering getting one?
4. What is your primary heat source?
5. Are you using renewables (solar, wind, micro-hydro) for household electric generation?
6. What changes have you made or are considering making to reduce your household waste and carbon impacts, including reliance on fossil fuels and plastics?

Doc recommended that we have a handout that includes links for more information. Dorian asked if we’re just collecting data but not recording names, how will we know if we’re not duplicating? Matt said we could make names optional, and ask people if anyone in their household has already done the survey.

Then we can find the most effective way to share the results with the public.

ACTION ITEM: Jim will ask Michael Scanlan and David Harris about recycling participation in our town, and do they have thoughts about how to overcome obstacles people may perceive?

4. Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) grant for the Town: Strafford's Grant Manager Stefanie Slayton has expressed interest in following up on a grant application, and John Freitag and IREC Jeff Grout is working on this. Their priority appears to be an evaluation of energy-efficiency improvements for the town garage. (Matt described this as a hard-to-heat space that would be easy to do wrong.) See: <https://www.trorc.org/programs/energy/merp/>.

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

* **Transportation:** David reported that Vermont's Department of Housing and Community Development is offering financial assistance for EV chargers (Levels 1 and 2) to be used in multi-family settings and businesses. See: <https://www.vermontevchargers.com/>.

Secondly, David reported that there are many more EVs and plug-in hybrids available, used and new, than a month or so ago. There are good incentives from the state, the utility, and the federal government. Doc asked about dealers David would recommend; he's heard that Alderman's in Rutland is customer-friendly (see: <https://www.aldermanchevrolet.com/Welcome>). David prefers to do web research then make an offer once he knows what's on a given lot, rather than sit in a dealer show room for hours. David described the advantages of buying a Tesla, including their super-chargers.

* **Weatherization / home heating / construction:** Doc has been recommended for one of the seats on the state advisory committee formed by the legislature. He has not

* **Community Solar/renewables:** Doc reported that Catamount is done with preparing the array for a hook-up to the utility poles. There are twenty-one members, with about twenty-five participating households. Doc shared the sign design for the array, with acknowledgment of Kevin Grady. The officers of the LLC are Ed Huang (registered agent), Suzanna Liepmann (treasurer), and Lorenz Rutz (secretary).

* **State Legislature:**

a. Susan reported on VPIRG's new campaign "Make Big Oil Pay," to hold oil companies accountable for the costs (at least some of them) of climate change caused by their actions and products, instead of us taxpayers picking up the tab for damages, etc. (see: <http://www.vpirg.org/news/make-big-oil-pay-launches/>). New York has very recently successfully passed this kind of bill. Related is the *Guardian* article I forwarded about how deeply Big Oil lobbyists are entrenched, even in "green" organizations and governments (see: www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/jul/05/double-agent-fossil-fuel-lobbyists/.)

b. She also talked about Burlington's wood-to-electricity plant, which is being challenged by climate activists there. Susan is trying to locate information I about legislation just passed (in Massachusetts?) that declares electricity made from burning wood cannot be marketed or credited as renewable.

* **Agriculture, forestry:** Susan H. reported that the barberry pulling at Ashley Community Forest continues, and David Paganelli has been enthusiastic about the results so far. The next session is Saturday morning, July 22.

6. Future meetings: Doc recommended that we ask Vanessa Rule to attend one of our meetings and talk about 350Vermont, Gus Speth to talk about international efforts, and Rosie Kerr to talk about Dartmouth sustainability initiatives. This could potentially be a public forum, not merely for our committee.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Next meeting is August 8, 2023 via Zoom.