

Minutes of the EMC General Meeting October 13, 2010

Voting Members Present (15): Eric Banford, Spring Buck, Clement Chow, Kenny Christianson, Brian Eden, Martha Ferger, Katie Kelly, Dan Lamb, Stan Marcus, Jim McGarry, Steve Nicholson, Roger Segelken, Kristine Shaw, Gary Stewart, Roger Yonkin

Voting Members Excused (3): Sarah Adams, Helen Slottje, Lucia Tyler

Voting Members Absent (1): Anthony Guarneri

Non-Voting Members Present (2): Dooley Kiefer, Peter Stein

Guests Present: Congressman Maurice Hinchey, Rick Manning, Jean McPheeters, Marguerite Wells

Staff Present: Kathy Wilsea

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chair Roger Segelken at 7:05 p.m.

Privilege of the Floor – There were no visitors who wished to speak under Privilege of the Floor.

Changes to the Agenda – If the Energy Committee drafts a resolution concerning community wind power, it will be addressed at the November meeting.

Approval of Minutes -- The minutes of September 15, 2010 were accepted without change. Final minutes are available on the EMC webpage: www.tompkins-co.org/emc.

Transportation Initiative of the Year Award – Communication Committee chair Spring Buck announced the presentation of the second annual TIY award to the Cayuga Waterfront Trail Initiative and the Chamber of Commerce for the third phase of the Waterfront Trail. Rick Manning accepted the award, explaining the long process in reaching the goal and acknowledging the role of Congressman Maurice Hinchey in securing funds. Jean McPheeters said each phase of the Trail has been a major accomplishment, and she is receiving positive comments all the time. She voiced appreciation for the support of EMC and the community. Congressman Hinchey thanked EMC for their support and Rick Manning for his work on the project. EMC chair Roger Segelken said it is important that an environmental organization supports this as transportation, which he perceives as anything that moves people. Roger Yonkin noted that there is a portion of the transportation budget available every year for trails, and this has been so for about 40 years.

Enfield Energy Update – EMC member Eric Banford introduced Marguerite Wells. In addition to serving on EMC, Eric is a member of a community group that has been meeting every other week to collaborate on wind issues. Marguerite gave a short PowerPoint slide show. She explained that Enfield energy is the company, and the project is called Black Oak Wind Farm. They plan 20 turbines, each of 2.5 MW capacity, on a series of hilltops. The wind farm will provide enough power for 18,800 homes over the course of one year. They have chosen the southwest corner of the Town of Enfield, which is the windiest place in Tompkins County. A high voltage transmission line is already in place.

The company has been gathering data for four years, and worked with the Town of Enfield to develop a local law for wind energy. The land is a combination of owned property and long-term leases. The Town is the lead agency for SEQR, and the Environmental Impact Statement is underway. Tompkins County Emergency Response has approved the locations, as there will be no interference with their emergency transmissions. Enfield Energy has applied to ISO, the grid operator that manages the marketplace of power, and has a queue position for interconnection.

They plan to sell power to interested Tompkins County residents. Financial partners are sought, and community ownership models are being developed with the volunteer help of Eric Banford. Specific equipment has not been determined yet, and a

benefit of the amount of time the project takes to develop is that the technology continues to improve. The construction phase is expected to take six months, and will involve securing some permits. Each turbine is completed in one day.

Marguerite provided information in the question period. She said they are finding more flexibility for assembly, with new ways to build and new materials as well as blades that shed ice. While there are few manufacturers on the east coast, there are a lot in the western US and in Europe. There was discussion on capacity, and Steve Nicholson explained that 300 watts is average household use. Marguerite said she would welcome any technical data on capacity and usage. Maintenance is important in achieving the average equipment life span of 20 years, with salvage value exceeding cost of deconstruction, so equipment is rarely abandoned. In addition to the issue of not interfering with emergency communications, when specific sites are chosen it will be necessary to get FAA permits. The most contentious issue in the EIS is bird studies. DEC establishes the criteria for the bird studies. Marguerite was not familiar with whether or not cell communication equipment can be co-located, but acknowledged that Enfield also needs cell communications. Although tax-free pilot projects exist, this project is expecting to pay taxes. She welcomes community support regarding the technology and funding. They have received some letters of intent to purchase wind power, although these are non-binding and have no established pricing. All colleges within 50 miles are being contacted, and Enfield Energy generally receives positive reception. While wind energy used to be considered non-traditional, it is becoming more acceptable and investors are becoming more informed. Marguerite welcomes comments and questions, and can be reached at EnfieldEnergy@gmail.com or 607-342-6805. The website is at www.EnfieldEnergy.com.

Committee Reports – As an update for the Energy Committee, Brian Eden said he met with the Department of Sustainability at Cornell and continues to interact with them concerning geothermal heat. CU has two projects developing. Because the Finger Lakes are not in the highest geothermal zone, CU has not been successful in securing grants, but is very dedicated and continues to pursue funding. CU is still using up their coal inventory. 85% of their energy is coming from the new heat & power plant, and the LINAC will increase their load.

Municipal Report – Eric VanEvery reported the Town of Lansing has signed a letter of intent for Enfield Energy. Also, citizens have donated \$100,000 for the new community playground, with further funding of approximately \$20,000 needed.

Appointment of Nominating Committee – The Chair appointed Roger Yonkin, Gary Stewart and Martha Feger to the Nominating Committee. Their duty is to develop a slate of one or more persons for December election for Chair and a slate or three or more persons for January election for Vice Chairs.

Reports – Legislature Liaison: Dooley Kiefer suggested that if EMC members have concerns about the Planning Department budget, they should speak to their legislator. Brian Eden said he would like to speak at the Legislature committee that works with the MEGA contract before a new contract is negotiated.

Chair: Roger Segelken will reschedule the Adopt-A-Highway cleanup for a Saturday in November. He reminded members that the pharmaceuticals collection event is still seeking volunteers for this Saturday.

Staff: Kathy Wilsea reported that surgery for Scott Doyle's daughter was successful, and they are home in Ithaca. Darby Kiley has started at the Planning Department, and will work on gas drilling issues with municipalities. Most of the funding for this one-year position came from a Park Foundation grant.

Member Items – Kenny Christianson said he missed EMC in July because he went to a Delaware River Basin Commission meeting on hydrofracturing. He was disappointed that most environmental groups did not get to testify. He also attended the September EPA hearings in Binghamton, where he did get to testify. Dan Lamb said Governor Paterson was in Binghamton today, and citizens asked about hydrofracturing. The governor said he wants the dGEIS to take as long as is needed, and does not expect it to be completed before his term of office finishes at the end of this year. Steve Nicholson announced the Broome County budget for 2011 has eliminated the job of the planner who serves as EMC Coordinator. She has also been serving as President of NYSAEMCs.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Secretary, Tompkins County Planning Department

Approved by Council on November 10, 2010