



City of Ann Arbor

Formal Minutes

Energy Commission

100 N. Fifth Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
<http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

5:30 PM 220 N. Main St., Administration Building Board Room

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Appleyard called the meeting to order at 5:35pm

ROLL CALL

Present Commissioners: Engelbert, Appleyard (temporary chair), Kurz, Miller, Wright, Wadland, Delaney, Long, Hieftje
Staff: Andrew Brix, Nate Geisler

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motioned by Comm. Wright, seconded by Comm. Appleyard and approved unanimously.

PUBLIC INPUT

Nate Ayers from the Burns Park Green Energy Association:
We have teamed up with Home Free Energy and obtained an infrared thermal camera, and so beginning a couple different audits available to Burns Park residents at very reasonable rates. In Lower Burns Park 23 households attended an association meeting and learned of the audits available and all attendees signed up.

More at www.burnsparkgreen.org

Another related resource: www.homefreeenergy.com

March 2nd is the second annual Ann Arbor Local Food Summit at the University of Michigan Dana Building, envisioning our food direction in the next decade, as well as the intersection of food and energy. More at www.localfoodsummit.org

Brad Mikus (3rd Ward resident) received an email about how the Farmer's Market energy costs have gone up despite the new solar panels and was hoping for an explanation.

Andrew Brix: This question came to my desk since it is budget time. What happened was energy and water were lumped together into general utility charges. We did see, in the first year of the Farmers Market solar, that total amount spent on energy purchased from the grid did go down 20%. Amounts spent did not go down because rates didn't stay even.

Brad Mikus: I think the audit at time of sale should be informational but not requiring of upgrades, this information alone will help people move ahead with upgrades.

Regarding the PACE program or something related, I remembering hearing about an option where renters can pay capital to home owners for solar upgrades, and last time there was a question about this concerning the rate of return. So if I gave say \$1,000 would I get a percentage back from the savings? My perspective is that you would get greater participation if this worked more like a loan, for maybe 3 to 5 years. I think it's a great idea, these are just some other ideas to consider.

ENERGY REPORT - NEWS FROM THE ENERGY OFFICE AND COMMISSION MEMBERS

Andrew Brix: March 16, U of M Dearborn conference on Energy for the Future. Looks to be many engineers and faculty. To learn more visit: www.energy.umich.edu

We received a \$218,712 grant for LEDs, for both indoor and outdoor applications, for uses other than what we are doing already. Work will culminate in an LED "City Council" meeting in the summer where neighboring municipalities and citizens can learn more about what Ann Arbor is doing in this area. This funding originated from federal stimulus dollars that filtered through the state of Michigan.

Comm. Delaney: This Friday at 2pm (at U of M Blau Auditorium) will be DTE's Clean Energy Prize competition and awards ceremony. Founded last year with DTE, U of M (host), as well as the Kresge Foundation and MASCO, UBS Bank, Google, and Nth Power among sponsors. This is a business plan prize for university students within Michigan. Thirty-two teams participated in coming up with a clean energy business concept that is ready to launch. Teams are competing for \$100,000. Last year's winner Algal Scientific went on to receive \$250,000 in pre-seed money from the state is doing well. Husk Insulation (second place) went on to MIT clean energy prize to win first place.

COMMUNITY UPDATES ON ENERGY

PACE Financing Program Update

Andrew Brix: Representative Warren's Great Lakes and Environment Committee held a hearing last Thursday and will be voted this Thursday. I attended and commented along with the Mayor. SEMCOG helped clarify some PACE-related language. We are waiting to hear of the Senate's introduction, which should be any day now. Staff continues to work on program elements in the event PACE does not go through, so that some sort of financing for energy efficiency will be supported. I will be at the

next Environmental Commission meeting and can come back here with what was discussed there.

Comm. Appleyard: Bernie Sanders co-sponsored a bill, the “10 million Solar Roofs Program” would provide further incentives and savings: 10 million gallons of water displaced by 2019, 30,000 MWh of solar PV. This would be run by DOE. Would offer \$1.75 per peak watt, reducing down to \$.50 per peak watt by 2019. 2 MW is the size limit, so would enable large installations.

State Legislative Update

No update

ENERGY CONSERVATION ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Energy Audit at Time of Sale

Andrew Brix: I met with the program officer in Austin (ECAD) who shared info that’s been uploaded to the Energy Commission Ctools website. Austin’s ordinance passed in November 2008. In the first 6 months they have performed 3,000 audits. Austin is larger but not that much larger than Ann Arbor. Audits have led to modifications to their solar rebate program. Duct leakage issues were a common issue, now requiring this work as a pre-condition to doing a solar project and getting the rebate. Not only is the info going out to potential home buyers but improving city operations too.

Comm. Appleyard: In the next couple of weeks we will have a list of questions we will need to have agreement on. The County has time of sale requirements on a few things. Once we are ready it would be good to meet with County folks so that this is not just a city effort.

Commercial and Residential Audits

Andrew Brix: Laura Palombi from the Energy Office is crunching some of the audit data numbers we’ve obtained and hopefully can share some findings at the next Commission meeting.

Building Codes, Guidelines, and Recommendations

Comm. Delaney: Plug-in electric vehicles are coming by the end of this year. Plug-in permitting and codes for charging stations and at homes is something we need to think about to be prepared. Installing stations, based off the California pilots, can take 30-40 days and we should be looking to streamline this kind process. DTE is looking at the costs for

home systems as well. Many homes will have varying requirements for the electrical and available storage for charging. The DDA has started to look at work place charging. DTE has installed to charging stations at our lot at 425 S. Main (among others in Detroit). Something to put on the radar for us.

Comm. Appleyard: In the past we had a nice code officials educational meeting on PVs, and maybe there would be a way for DTE to facilitate something like this for charging stations. DTE's site is near where Zipcar operates, and it would be great if they had an electric car as part of their program

Comm. Delaney: Zipcar are looking at this and I believe have done so in California. DTE has a program manager named Anna Medina, responsible for the preparedness plan for DTE, and guidance for the broader community. We are all learning as we go along.

Comm. Appleyard: There is a new YouTube video about plug-in vehicles and the grid. A 9 and ½ minute piece about how these cars won't expand the grid and may be used for additional storage and utilization.

Andrew Brix: This video is a "favorite" on the Energy Office YouTube website and available from www.a2gov.org/energy.

RENEWABLE ENERGY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Geothermal Utility

Andrew Brix: We are meeting Thursday with Hardin Geotech and will know more then.

Solar America Cities Project: Draft Plan

Andrew Brix: Last Thursday 25 or so members of the partnership, including a number of Energy Commissioners, met at City Hall. We focused the meeting on the recommendations of the plan, with financial incentives coming out as a clear key priority and we will be meeting again for fine-tuning this piece soon. An invitation for the follow-up will be sent to the Commission.

Lisa Dugdale (Clean Energy Coalition): You should all have copies, we are asking for comments this week. In the next three weeks or more we will incorporate edits and have a final version in March.

5000 Solar Roofs Project

Comm. Appleyard: May get another boost from the Fed, per my earlier statement and the Michigan Appliance Rebate Program (coming tomorrow). These in addition to the Solar Currents from DTE is making solar more within reach.

Solar Access Zoning

Andrew Brix: Thursday this came up [at Solar Plan meeting] and there was strong interest.

Comm. Appleyard: I think this makes sense in residential areas, not downtown, and would need many controls built into it.

Comm. Long: I think the Planning Commission must be engaged as this is more of a land-use issue.

Comm. Hieftje: We will want to check with the attorney's office as there could be takings issues with this. For instance, with buildings across the street from each other: one wants solar, but in so doing it limits the density of the other.

Andrew Brix: The point is well taken and may mean that any focus is more residential and not downtown for the reasons just described.

Comm. Long: That is why I think this is best handled with the Planning staff and their Commission.

Comm. Hieftje: My point is that we should make sure we understand the legal issues before going before the Council.

Comm. Appleyard: Our contribution could be offering the data on what other states and cities have done.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Retreat Planning

Comm. Appleyard: We have it planned for March 13, and there is a survey to fill-out before-hand to help determine priorities.

Comm. Long: The subcommittee has been meeting and determined March 13 as the date. Dina's done great with making the survey and we are talking about getting a professional facilitator to assist, please email Commissioners Appleyard, Kurz, or myself if you have preference for the people we have been in touch with and for other input.

Andrew Brix: As of now we have Gallup Park meeting room from 8am to

1pm, across from Huron High School.

Comm. Kurz: The survey should take 15 minutes. Have your bio ready; the point is that it is helpful to know interests and skills. Also is an opportunity to talk about your top issues for 2010. There is an Energy Commission Ctools site with the bylaws and other info. Should be reviewing bylaws for background. 4 to 5 hours is not a very long time to get a sense of scope and projects we want for this year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Comm. Miller: I understand the MPSC has a tariff hearing for DTE, and I'm wondering what our participation is on this.

Andrew Brix: Those are going to the MPSC tomorrow, so we will see what rates are and whether that fits with what we are seeing. Can't do a whole lot until we see what is filed.

Comm. Miller: So there are proposed rates being filed in those rate cases?

Andrew Brix: That is my understanding.

Comm. Miller: Should be a comment period. Has DTE talked at all to the city?

Andrew Brix: We have talked to them but not shared much, but that has been as much a bandwidth issue as much as anything else. They have had their own test-installations up and we will see what they have come up with.

Comm. Miller: We should continue to remind ourselves that LEDs have been the most efficient way for the city to meet our energy goals and should be a priority.

NEW BUSINESS

Comm. Hieftje: The city passed a resolution for a city property arts center as part a city greenway. This would be for the old parks garage, an historic building. We won't be using city funds, but looking for grants. We want this to be a model for energy-efficiency renovation. Building needs a great deal of work, but basic foundation is sound. We will be seeking out grants for energy-efficiency, stormwater control, arts, and greenways. This will be a model initiative for how to still support this kind of installation that the community has settled on as a goal. So stay tuned, there may be a role for the energy commission on this.

PUBLIC INPUT

Brad Mikus suggested that energy audits might also occur at time of lease, not just at time of sale.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Comm. Delaney: Hybrid-electric vehicles an area I have spent the last 3 years working on and we need to address this topic directly.

Andrew Brix: Audit data from Laura will be on next month. Also, back in October a U of M PhD candidate did a behavioral study regarding personal reductions in greenhouse gas use for that month. The student should be ready to present next month.

ADJOURN

Motioned by Comm. Hieftje, seconded by Comm. Delaney at 6:26pm.

Visit www.a2gov.org/energy to learn more about Ann Arbor's Energy Programs

Shown Live on CTN Channel 16 - Replays Wednesday 2/10 at 10:00am and Sunday 1/17 at 2:00pm

Past meetings can also be viewed online at <http://a2gov.pegcentral.com>