



EMC News

September 1, 2009

www.tompkins-co.org/emc

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ENERGY COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Kenny Christianson

While the Energy Committee has not met over the summer, several subcommittees have been active. Steve Nicholson, Roberta Dixon and Kenny Christianson met several times to discuss plans for the Bioneers conference on October 16 - 18. We hope to have a program with displays for attendees of the conference on the Ithaca Commons on October 18. More information will be forthcoming.

Peter Harriott and Kenny Christianson met to review the solar panel data from the library. The bad news is that the solar panels have not provided the energy originally predicted by Powerlight in 2001. The good news is that, including estimates for missing data, the solar panels have produced 950 MWH so far. We should reach the milestone of 1 million KWH by the end of the year. A graph of the electricity output of the solar panels so far has been prepared for the Bioneers conference.

The EMC Energy Committee will have its next meeting on Thursday, September 3 at 5:00 in the Old Jail Large Conference Room. We will discuss preparations for the Bioneers Conference and next steps for county energy improvements.

BIOMASS FAIR

Submitted by Tony Nekut

Tompkins County Extension will put on a "Biomass Fair" Oct. 17 at Cayuga Nature Center. The event will have demonstrations of firewood preparation, heating appliances for firewood and other biomass fuels, including the new wood chip boiler at CNC, and information about current and future biomass energy developments. CCE recently received a \$30k grant from NYSERDA to "Increase the Efficiency of Wood Heating Through Public Education". For more info, contact Guillermo Metz at CCE.

A Bioneers Conference is scheduled for Oct 16-18 at IC. It is being organized by Sustainable Tompkins. I will be giving a short presentation on 10/18 titled "Local Biomass Production and Utilization". Beaming Bioneers is a nationwide, multi-site conference linked to the main Bioneers event in San Rafael, CA. For more info visit www.bioneers.org.

TOWN OF CAROLINE REPORT

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

The new Town office building has been ordered, and will be delivered before the end of September. There will be 4 offices, a transaction counter, a secure file storage room, and a new public library. Installed next to the existing Town Hall, this modified modular will be a model of energy efficiency, an Energy Star building. A 12.6 kilowatt rooftop photovoltaic array will provide most of the electricity needed, including a ground loop geothermal heat pump for heating and air conditioning. The Town gets a \$5/watt rebate from NYSERDA, and can net-meter. The geothermal system will be partially paid for by grants. Energy Independent Caroline is conducting a community fundraising campaign to further support this project.

Energy Independent Caroline also held, on August 20, an informational meeting for all families located within a mile of the top of Speed Hill road. This site has been identified as having one of the best wind resources in the Town, as well as being close to the existing 3 phase powerlines. There were many supporters of a wind project, and others became convinced of the need to produce independent power if all residents would benefit financially. The next step will be to install a meteorological tower to determine the extent of the annual wind resource.

The Barille 2 streambank enhancement project has FEMA funding and DEC approval. The engineering, bidding specifications and permits are done. Approval from the State budget office and a few leases are pending, so the project has been postponed until 2010.

MEMBER RECRUITMENT

Submitted by Kathy Wilsea, EMC Secretary

Letters to members with expiring seats, information to the public, and press releases have gone out during the recruiting round for new members and reappointments. If you need to apply for reappointment to an at-large seat, don't forget the deadline is October 23rd.

If you know anyone who would be interested in one of these vacant seats, please let them know we are looking for applicants: Town of Danby, Town of Enfield, Village of Freeville, Town of Groton, Village of Groton, Town of Newfield, Village of Trumansburg.

REDUCING GHG EMISSIONS IN TOMPKINS COUNTY: CELEBRATING LOCAL ACTION
Submitted by Roberta Dixon

To raise the profile of local efforts and highlight our sustainable community, the EMC is planning an event that will take place on Sunday, October 18.

Examples of local action include:

- Tompkins County has been a member of ICLEI (Local Government for Sustainability) since April 2001 [ICLEI, formerly known as: International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives];
- December 2008: TC Legislature voted and approved the addition of the “Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element” into the existing Comprehensive Plan;
- Energy improvements in County buildings; i.e., the Tompkins County Public Library;
- Success of CarShare Program;
- TC Solid Waste’s waste reduction efforts;
- Ithaca Rentals & Renovations: setting up a composting program at their Lakeland complex;
- Services for the community (loans for home improvements, energy efficiency programs);
- Danby Biofuels Project;
- Tompkins County leads NYS in kilowatts of photovoltaics installed and the total number of PV systems;
- First “TIY” award (Transportation Initiative of the Year).

It is hoped that EMC committees will be on hand to talk about past accomplishments and future plans. Additional details will be discussed at the September EMC meeting.

Upcoming EMC meetings!

September 9th at 7:00pm
October 14th, November 18th, December 9th
At the Transit Center

Members: If you are unable to attend, please contact Amy Risen, Chair (ajr53@cornell.edu) or Kathy Wilsea, Secretary (274-5560 or kwilsea@tompkins-co.org)



DANBY’S BROWN ROAD PROJECT
Submitted by Roberta Dixon

Just north of the railroad crossing on Danby’s Brown Road, there is a very steep hill that cuts through silt and clay. The roadside ditches have been a continual source of sediment that flows into Inlet Creek. Carl Seamon, Danby’s Highway Superintendent, lined the ditches with rocks, and between resurfacing the road and lining the ditches, this one project has had a meaningful impact on water clarity in Inlet Creek, particularly after major storm events. Highway ditching is a major source of erosion and sedimentation in the Cayuga Lake watershed, and the Danby project was a sustainable and logical solution to this problem.

