



# South Burlington Energy Committee

June 24, 2026

The South Burlington Energy Committee held a regular meeting on Wednesday, June 24 in Room 301, 180 Market St. and by Zoom remote participation.

Members present: Steve Crowley (Chair), Keith Epstein, Ethan Goldman, MJ Reale (Vice-Chair), Marley Hauser

Also present: Bettina Miguez (Climate Action Manager), Beth Zigmund (City Council)

Member of the public: none

1. Welcome and Agenda review
2. Comments and questions from the public not related to the agenda: none
3. Updates From Committee Members/Events and conferences attended:

MJ attended a Shelburne Farms event where Bill McKibben presented an uplifting view on climate technology, particularly solar energy.

#### 4. Staff Reports:

Bettina attended the UVM RISE conference with Sophia and Ilona, which included AI's role in entrepreneurship and community trust-building. Interesting data about EVs and EV charging in rural areas was discussed.

Bettina updated the group on:

- installation of new EV charging stations at the police department- featuring 4 ports on a public-facing location with the same ChargePoint pricing structure as existing stations. Parking for EV chargers is considered an accessory use, eliminating the need for Planning Commission changes as long as the city includes information about this on their website.
- Progress on the Charging Smart program- developing checklists for both residential and business EV charger installations
- Plug-in/balcony solar legislation- effective July 1st. South Burlington preparing documentation and info on website with input from Fire Marshal and electrical inspectors.
- Upcoming bond vote for the Burnett Bay wastewater treatment upgrade
- Potential collaboration with NetZero

Beth reported that the City Council unanimously decided to prioritize energy code enforcement and discussed potentially adding commercial building energy efficiency measures to the

committee's work plan. Ethan mentioned that he had read in a DOE report that visual inspections were not reliable as a way of verifying compliance with energy codes. The report recommended training and education of contractors.

To Do:

Ethan:

- Send information and link about the DOE energy code compliance study to the group.

5. Green Community Festival update:

The committee discussed festival logistics including vendor participation, expert zones, and marketing strategies, with particular attention to incorporating more diverse topics beyond just energy.

Most other city committees were interested in participating, with the Economic Development Committee offering connections despite unavailability that weekend. The Public Arts Committee expressed interest in creating community art using colorful bottle caps, and Bike and Ped agreed to lead a commuting expert zone. Food vendors including El Gato, Scale, Judy's Ice Cream, and Folinos were approached. The layout was planned with a music stage where the solar bus previously was located, with food and activities positioned to guide foot traffic flow.

Beth suggested inviting The Intervale and Bettina mentioned that she had filled in a form for folks from the state comprehensive energy plan team to have a table to solicit feedback.

Experts- Experts would have a 1-hr time slot rather than a full four-hour commitment. Looking for a heat pump expertise- possible topics like new window-mounted heat pump technology and panel upgrade alternatives. Can also seek gardening expert. Have bike commuter expert lined up.

Survey- discussed the effectiveness of surveys at energy events, noting that they work best when limited to three questions and conducted as conversational interviews rather than written responses. They proposed asking two key questions: what people's biggest questions are related to energy and what prevents them from electrifying their homes. Another idea was to reach out to exhibitors ahead of time to track common questions people are asking or collect feedback from exhibitors as they pack up.

SBEC festival table – what info should we provide? Decided to focus on balcony/plug in solar. Perhaps something on window heat pumps- checking on what VGS will have.

To do:

Bettina:

- Send exhibitor applications to Natural Resources Committee, Bike and Ped Committee and other relevant city committees/contacts for Festival participation.
- Reach out to the Library to invite them to participate in the Green Community Festival.
- Coordinate with Public Arts Committee and other groups to involve high school and middle school students in the Green Community Festival
- Work with Sophia and others to develop and distribute marketing/communications for the Festival (Front Porch Forum, Seven Days, city newsletter, social media)

MJ:

- Reach out to the Intervale, UVM Extension, 350 VT and other relevant organizations (e.g., Citizens Climate Lobby, 350 Vermont) about participating (cc Bettina)
- Ask Pat Perry to participate as a heat pump expert and UVM Extension for gardening.
- Contact North Star and other bike/ebike vendors again regarding participation

Marley/MJ:

- Develop content for informational materials SBEC table – plug-in solar

All:

- Survey asking about challenges to electrification for Festival attendees.
- Questions to exhibitors/experts on what people asked the most about

6. Additional discussion points:

- Plug in Solar- discussed solar panel specifications, confirming a 1,200-watt system requirement with GFCI outlet needs and estimated annual production of about 1,000 kilowatt-hours. The committee plans to create a basic FAQ webpage about solar installation – what are best practices and additional content.
- 802 Homes- The group discussed concerns about state-provided housing plans not meeting South Burlington's energy code standards and considered asking the City Council to write a letter requesting upgrades to these plans. They also reviewed findings from a DOE energy code compliance study and discussed potential pathways to improve compliance, including technical assistance and energy professional pathways.

All interested members should attend input sessions (July 9, 16, 20) for Homes for All 802 and provide feedback/input as appropriate.

- Barlett Bay – upcoming bond vote for the Burnett Bay wastewater treatment upgrade, which includes significant energy efficiency improvements despite being primarily a wastewater treatment upgrade project.
- Annual Report – MJ will review minutes from July 2025 to June 2026 to create a summary of accomplishments.

To do:

Beth:

- Bring the issue of pre-approved home plans and energy code compliance to City Council as an update
- Reach out to ACCD (Agency of Commerce and Community Development) to clarify details about the Homes for All 802 Homes Catalog and its compliance with local energy codes before City Council considers further action.

MJ:

- MJ will review minutes from July 2025 to June 2026 to create a summary of accomplishments.

7. Approval of meeting minutes:

Keith made a motion to accept the May 2026 meeting minutes. MJ seconded the motion and the group unanimously approved the minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm. Next meeting is July 22, 2026.