**Corvallis Sustainability Coalition**

**ENERGY ACTION TEAM**

**Meeting Notes for 4/14/21**

Present: Marge Stevens, Wendy Woods, Jeanette Hardison, Dan Orzech, Larry Weymouth, Nancy Evenson, Jean Townes, Kirk Rensmeyer, Mike Fahey, Julie Williams, Carly Werdel, Kathryn Duvall, Jason Garcia, Annette Mills

1. **Introductions** (name, organizational affiliation, work group)
2. **Purpose of meeting** – Hear updates from Energy Action Team work groups
3. **Home Energy Score**

Goal: To implement a Home Performance Rating Program in Corvallis

Lead/Presenter: Marge Stevens

* Met with individual city councilors (Ellis, Chaplen, Shepherd)
* Met with representatives of Willamette Association of Realtors
* Met with the co-owner of Town & Country Realty.
* Met with City staff (Paul Bilotta of Community Development, and Jerry Sorte and Kathryn Duvall of Economic Development)
* Developed a Power Point slide presentation for use at each of the above meetings; provides an overview of Home Energy Score
* Are in process of developing an FAQ page for Home Energy Score
* Plan to meet with other city councilors and other realtors to get feedback
* Will be meeting with Willamette Association of Realtors Governance Committee in June
* Main message from city councilors: This sounds great, but we don’t want a room full of angry realtors when we’re considering adopting a Home Energy Score ordinance
* Might meet with Finance Director to discuss options for waiving assessment fee for low-income homeowners

Discussion:

* What scoring system are you using? U.S. Dept. of Energy
* How are you addressing realtor concerns?
  + Portland and Milwaukie both have HES programs, and we’re learning a lot from them about how they have addressed realtor concerns.
  + The Oregon Dept. of Energy and Earth Advantage are providing us with support.
  + Portland found that realtors’ concerns were unfounded, once the program was implemented.
  + Milwaukie had informational meetings for realtors and didn’t experience pushback. Education is key.
* Will we have enough assessors trained to conduct Home Energy Scores? Only 1-2 assessors will be needed to handle Corvallis.

1. **Local/State Government Action**

Goal: Use Governor of Oregon’s Executive Order 20-04 as the basis for discussions with the City of Corvallis regarding climate action

Lead/Presenter: Kirk Rensmeyer

* Met in February with Christy Anderson Brekken (Senior Instructor and Research Associate in the Department of Applied Economics at OSU), who talked with us about deep decarbonization. Christy is President of the Citizens Utility Board, which is the watchdog group for the Public Utilities Commission (PUC).
  + She discussed the upcoming “Green Future Choice” workshop, sponsored by the PUC, which several of us attended.
  + There is pending legislation that would allow any community in the state to opt into renewable energy. This is based on a program that PGE launched in 2019. Several communities have signed on to the program, with just a slight increase in their utility bills.
  + Other energy-related bills are moving through the legislature.
* Compiled a list of grassroots climate advocates from around the state; the group is meeting next week to talk about starting a Statewide Grassroots Climate Action Network to share ideas and support each other’s efforts.

1. **Residential Energy Efficiency**Goal: To make homes more energy efficient and to move them toward Net Zero

Lead/Presenter: Julie Williams

* Met in February and discussed how Home Energy Score creates the need for people to look for efficiency opportunities in their homes. Talked about creating a HES Bingo card to make the ideas more accessible.
* Nancy Evenson (Housing Action Team Sustainable Housing Work Group) is offering free Home Retrofit Clinics.
  + The clinics are individualized 2-hour consultations. Nancy collects data about the home ahead of time to tailor the clinics to participants; gives an overview of energy efficiency opportunities.
  + Focus is on existing homes.
  + There have been 10 sessions so far.
  + Needs more publicity. Suggestion: Promote through Coalition Google groups.
* Seeds for the Sol continues to enable solar and heat pump water heaters for low and middle income homeowners.
  + Has a partnership with Energy Trust of Oregon. SFTS conducts short energy efficiency surveys with clients and shares the results with ETO; helps track ETO’s effectiveness.
  + Is printing 500 door hangers that will be distributed to low and middle income households.
  + Is looking to provide gap funding for insulation; ETO has a program that covers nearly 100% for income-qualified homeowners.
* Used EV’s now get a $2500 tax credit at point of purchase.

Discussion:

* Climate Action Advisory Board now has funds for a Revolving Loan Fund ($58,000). Application form is being finalized and will be released soon. Fund is for nonprofits, co-ops, schools, etc.
* Suggestion: Put an insert in City’s utility bills to alert people to energy efficiency opportunities.
* Brekken’s students have created a grid that shows all of the local/state/federal energy incentives that are available. Suggestion: Put it on the Coalition’s website.
* Question: Any data about percentage of installations that are hybrid water heaters? ETO: not yet. City requires permit when home is going from gas to electric water heater, so that data would be available.

1. **Solarize Corvallis**

Goal: To install large solar arrays at as many Corvallis facilities as possible by 2025

Lead/Presenter: Annette Mills, Dan Orzech

* Our 4th project, 150 kW of solar at CHS, is being installed this month. Meeting today with CSD staff and bond manager.
* Feb – Met with City of Corvallis Public Works staff to explore large solar array at Wastewater Treatment Facility.
* Feb – Helped launch the Oregon Interfaith Solar Campaign.
  + Statewide organizing committee
  + Have had 3 online forums, 1 in March, 2 this month, 4th one next week
  + Three faith communities from Corvallis that are interested (FUMC, St. Mary’s, Suburban)
* Feb/March – One-on-one meetings with the mayor and 3 city councilors re. solar for the City.
* April – Requested a meeting with Fire Chief re. solar for 2 stations (Circle Blvd & 35th St.); he delegated another rep. from Fire Dept. and members of the consulting team that’s doing renovation.
* Yesterday – Met with representatives of Corvallis Housing First, which provides permanent supported housing to chronically homeless individuals.
  + They received state funds to purchase Budget Inn.
  + Talked about putting 20 kW solar array.
  + Looks like that will be our next project.
* OCPC is working on projects with OSU – coming soon!

Discussion:

* Isn’t there land available at the Corvallis Airport for community solar?
  + There’s land, but it’s too far from the substation in South Corvallis to be feasible for community solar.

1. **Other EAT Work Groups** - We have two work groups that haven’t met because they each need a leader: Communications Support and Funding Support.

Goal of the Communications Support Work Group: To provide messages and tools to effectively communicate with target audiences

Goal of Funding Support Work Group: To identify and promote sources and mechanisms to help fund climate action

Email Annette (info@sustainablecorvallis.org) if you’d like to consider leading one of these work groups.

1. **Other local efforts** related to climate action or energy (City of Corvallis, Benton County, nonprofits)

* We could invite the Community Services Consortium (CSC) Weatherization Program staff to speak to us about their program.
* Can’t the City of Corvallis use its communications tools to help promote energy efficiency? It’s imperative for the City to help educate our community about the need for climate action.
* The Corvallis Carbon Offset Fund is now up and running. Those who want to contribute can sign up at the Corvallis Environmental Center website. That fund has recently made grants to Solarize Corvallis, Greenbelt Land Trust, Marys River Watershed Council, and Seeds for the Sol.
  + Suggestion: Use the Coalition website to promote the fund.

1. **Upcoming opportunities**

* Sponsor an event featuring Christy Anderson Brekken to talk about how the Public Utilities Commission works, the role of the Citizens Utility Board, and what’s happening at the state level in terms of climate action
* Special EAT meeting to learn how to use the Equity Impact Assessment, a tool that the Coalition’s leadership has adopted to help advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Coalition

Next quarterly Energy Action Team meeting will be on Wednesday, July 14, time TBD.