



## Suggested Strategies from Panelists of the 9/29/16 Forum on Renewable Energy and Climate Change Adaptation in Northwest Connecticut

### Ray Furse

- Periodically review programs supporting local energy projects (efficiency and renewables) to ensure they are consistent with Regional Plan of Conservation & Development goals. Revisit the role and potential of C-PACE in supporting local commercial development.
- Coordinate a regional response to state and utility energy policies and programs. Be vigilant of utility and political pushback. Advocate for what fits RPCD plans (e.g., virtual net metering, community solar); push back on what does not (disproportionately unfavorable rate changes).
- Establish a channel to express this regional consensus on energy policies, one that is recognized by and impressive to policymakers. This could be the "Energy Committee of NHCOC" or the NCD or something other.
- Going Forward (now or future RPCD): Develop a map of "behind the meter" distributed energy resources in our towns that with the future addition of storage (batteries) could serve as centers for emergency services in the event of grid failure or fuel supply disruption.

### Lynn Stoddard

- Explore options for denser mixed-use development, connectivity to civic amenities, in your existing village centers to enhance mobility options (ped, bike, etc) for your communities
- Prepare your communities to be "solar ready:" inventory of potential renewable energy sites (focusing on large rooftops - schools, town halls, large commercial buildings - and parking lots); identification of challenges and planning proactively to steer renewables where you want them (e.g. not on prime ag land); consideration of increased value of solar with back-up storage, micro-grids, productive use of otherwise unusable space (roofs, parking lots), etc.
- Perform a vulnerability assessment - what sites, buildings, infrastructure in your town are necessary for the town to function and how are they vulnerable to risk under a changing climate
- Inclusion of new design parameters that address a changing climate - e.g., stormwater management that plans for more frequent "100 year" storms, buildings that can serve multiple uses (school and shelters in extreme heat or power outages), etc.

#### Michael Criss

- The NHCOC could help the municipalities by adding a point person to help assist municipalities to come up with a 10yr plan, locate and assist with grant opportunities.
- Assist with cost savings and analysis of each project under current conditions
- Explore regional solar farms and their benefits to municipalities.
- Assist with regional opportunities for municipalities to partner together in financing a cost saving plan.

#### John Post

- Describe the Clean Energy Communities initiative, and leverage the professional support offered as part of the program
- Set a specific goal of energy reduction for the community
- Undertake an effort to catalogue the historical energy use of town buildings. Doing so helps set initial building targets for remediation
- Undertake energy audits, focusing on both lighting and mechanical equipment
- Become aware of state incentives to help reduce costs
- Prepare an “Action Plan” for the town to help ensure the energy saving efforts become an institutional part of town thinking
- Investigate renewable energy sources to help reduce the carbon-based energy used by the town

#### Joanna Wozniak-Brown

- Incorporate climate change as a priority into town-wide plans even adding it to POCD before next full update
- Consider regional working group to exchange ideas and leverage funding
- Incorporate items from the “Adaptation Menu” from the “Connecticut Climate Change Preparedness Plan” into municipal operations. For example, look at the public works projects plan to incorporate adaptation efforts such as appropriate culvert size or during zoning regulation review, incorporate low-impact development standards.
- Conduct a town-wide vulnerability assessment to identify vulnerabilities and *prioritize* actions [Can even start with focused assessments such as infrastructure or agriculture. Don't be afraid to be a work in progress.]

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As presented at the “5<sup>th</sup> Thursdays” Forum for Land Use Commissions, September 29, 2016, 6:30pm-8pm.