

# **Revised Terms of Reference**

## **Energy Working Group**

### **Summary**

The Board of Trustees is charging the Energy Working Group to assist the Village in prioritizing energy projects that lower Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by the Village and increase the resiliency of the Village's energy infrastructure. The Energy Working Group will work as a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission, assuming the responsibility for most energy-related areas addressed by the Commission. It will address pertinent recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan and the Sustainability Action Plan. It will evaluate NYSERDA, Federal and other funding opportunities for specific energy projects. At appropriate times, it will solicit public comments and will evaluate those passed to it by the Board. When appropriate it will prepare actions for implementation by the Board of Trustees.

### **Background**

The creation of the Energy Working Group is driven by the Board of Trustee's desire to accelerate the implementation of the portions of the Comprehensive Plan and Sustainability Action Plan that focus on sustainability, GHG emission reduction and resiliency. Both Village plans incorporate a wide range of actions that seek to reduce GHG emissions and address Climate Change, as well as improve energy infrastructure resiliency. Furthermore, NYSERDA regularly introduces new energy initiatives for municipalities which must be evaluated for their relevance to the Village and responded to when they support the Village's energy goals. A timely response to these initiatives is essential in order for the Village to successfully compete for available funding for these projects.

Both the Comprehensive Plan and the Sustainability Action Plan are over seven years old and, although much of what they envision for energy is still relevant, it is important to periodically review and prioritize the actions they call for. The Working Group will assist the Conservation Commission in doing this.

### **Implementation Details**

#### *Working Group Structure*

The Conservation Commission will have responsibility for determining the number, make-up and members of the Energy Working Group. While the number of members of the Working Group may change over time, depending upon needs and work demand, it will start with five. At least one member of the Working Group will be a member of the Conservation Commission. One member of the Board of Trustees will be designated as a liaison with the Working Group. The Commission may add new members to the Working Group when needed and also rescind membership for an individual from the Working Group at its own will and discretion. One of the Working Group's first orders of business will be to choose its own chair, set its own meeting times. The Working Group can, in turn, create working groups composed of subsets of its own membership as well as other residents for advice or input if it will facilitate its mission.

### *Public Meetings*

While any member of the public may attend its meetings, it is the Working Group's decision to determine if any given meeting will involve public input or will be considered a work session and not involve public input. All meetings should have an agenda and meeting dates should be forwarded to the Village for publication in the Village calendar. It would be helpful if the Working Group issued a brief summary a reasonable period after the meeting that summarized the issue discussed and shared that summary with the Conservation Commission, the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent of Public Works.

### *Process*

The Board anticipates that this process will involve several phases that are likely to include:

- **Working Group formation and mobilization**  
This includes selection of a new chair, establishing dates and schedules, deciding on procedural issues
- **Creation of first year's Program**  
The group would review the Comprehensive Plan, the Sustainability Action Plan, recent NYSEDA initiatives, community input and their own experience and identify the initial projects to consider for initial implementation. This will be reviewed and endorsed by the Conservation Commission.
- **Finalize Initial Program Approval**  
The Working Group will present the first year's program to the Board and the public and the Board will review the program and determine what components the Board will support.
- **Program Development**  
Based on the proposed program, the Working Group will work to form the individual efforts into projects ready for implementation. During the project formulation stage, the Working Group may seek input and consensus from other Village groups, like the DPW. As those projects are ready to be queued up, they will be passed to the Board for approval.
- **Program Approval**  
The Board will review the program and determine its disposition. Once approved, it will be returned to the Village manager.
- **Project Implementation**  
The Village Manager will determine how to best implement the project.
- **Comprehensive Plan Coordination**  
The group will work with the Comprehensive Plan Committee to provide input as required on the energy-related updates to the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Sustainability Action Plan Coordination**  
As the Conservation Commission reviews and revises the Sustainability Action Plan, the Working Group will be responsible for those aspects of the Plan that pertain to energy, as designated by the Conservation Commission.

### *Budget and resources*

The Working Group will not have an independent budget. They can raise money, via grants or other avenues, with the Board's permission.

The Committee will have access to meeting facilities (as mentioned above).

If there is a need for engineering or consulting resources, the Working Group will approach the Village Manager who will determine what resources may be appropriate. If the Village manager determines that an external consultant is required, the Village Manager will seek approval for any paid consultant services from the Board of Trustees.

*Working Group Deliverables*

The Working Group will produce memoranda, draft language for legal code changes, plans and any other deliverables necessary to describe a project in great enough detail to ensure implementation.

*Working Group Sunset Clause*

The Working Group has no termination date. It will continue to function as long as there are Energy issues worth review and project implementation. It can be terminated at any time by the Board of Trustees.

Original Terms approved by BOT on June 20, 2017

<https://www.hastingsgov.org/sites/hastingsonhudsonny/files/minutes/17-06-20.pdf>

Trustee Armacost moved to approve the establishment of the Energy Working Group, seconded by Trustee Lopez. Motion carried, all voting “aye”. Approved 5-0.

Revised Terms of Reference approved by BOT on December 19, 2017 by unanimous vote.