

WAITSFIELD ENERGY COMMITTEE

2011 Annual Report

The Town of Waitsfield's Energy Committee, with the support of the Selectboard, Town staff and others, continued efforts in 2011 to address weatherization and fuel efficiency in Waitsfield's municipal buildings, as well as laying the groundwork for a property-assessed financing initiative for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements for Waitsfield homeowners.

The Town received Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECBG) funding in 2010 to assist the development of a program by which Waitsfield homeowners could access funding for eligible energy efficiency and renewable energy projects and then pay back the cost as a regular municipal assessment on that property owner's property tax or other municipal bill. This program, referred to initially as a Clean Energy Assessment District (CEAD), has been known more recently as a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program and is a strategy being pursued in towns and cities nationwide.

During 2011 the state of Vermont took additional steps to advance PACE, addressing concerns from the mortgage industry and permitting Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, d/b/a Efficiency Vermont, to act as a statewide administrator for participating Vermont towns. Chris Badger, Waitsfield's Energy Coordinator, participated in a day-long informational workshop hosted during the fall of 2011. More information is available on the VEIC website at: www.veic.org/resourcelibrary/PACE.aspx

The role of Efficiency Vermont as an administrator for the program allowed the Town to reallocate a portion of the EECBG funds to promote PACE by pre-qualifying homes for energy improvements with a \$250 subsidy for a residential energy audit by qualified efficiency contractors. As part of this initiative, the Energy Committee also organized an energy efficiency skillshop, where Waitsfield residents could receive training on performing Do-It-Yourself efficiency improvements on their own homes. Nearly 20 Waitsfield homes and 14 residents participated in the energy audit and skillshop as part of the 2011 PACE EECBG initiative.

The Town of Waitsfield, as well as the Mad River Valley, was fortunate to have a PACE initiative selected as a topic area for UVM's Local

Community Initiative, in which three graduate students in applied economics reviewed the opportunities and impact the initiative could have on reducing the cost of energy for the local housing stock. More information on the collaborative project can be found at:

<http://www.mrvpd.org/documents/PACE%20MRV%20Final%20Presentation%20LCI.pdf>

The Town of Waitsfield is positioned as one of the leading communities in the state in promoting the advancement of PACE, and the Energy Committee continues to look for opportunities to support cost-effective renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements to residential homes, businesses and the Town's municipal facilities.

Chris Badger, Energy Coordinator

Committee Members: Sal Spinosa, Valerie Capels, Charlie Hosford, Brian Shupe, Dennis Derryberry