

May 13, 2009

Town of New Castle  
Board of Selectmen  
Planning Board

**Re: Proposed Energy Chapter for the Master Plan**

To the New Castle Board of Selectmen:

The New Castle Energy Committee (NCEC) has been working diligently to identify the town's energy uses and potential cost savings. The committee formed into sub-task teams and one of these the building weatherization team, identified energy improvements for the municipal buildings. In addition, we obtained a grant from the Rockingham Planning Commission and Clean Air-Cool Planet to facilitate our energy planning. Our tasks have included development of an energy inventory for municipal buildings and an Energy Chapter for the Master Plan Town of New Castle, New Hampshire.

***Rationale***

In 2008, New Castle was one of 165 municipalities that passed the New Hampshire Climate Change Resolution that calls on the federal government to prioritize climate change policy and enables the formation of a local energy committee for the town of New Castle, which will address energy efficiency and conservation, emission reductions, and other energy related issues. The generation and use of energy and emissions from energy use - whether for our homes, businesses, transportation or recreation - has a very significant impact on our environment, and the health and welfare of the community. In support of energy conservation, NH State law encourages energy efficient patterns of development through zoning that promotes alternative and renewable sources of energy.

***Findings of the NCEC***

1. Town buildings would benefit from general weatherization and, in some cases, improvements to the heating and cooling systems.
2. The Town does not have a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) from which to fund and implement energy efficiency and conservation strategies, including planning improvements to municipal infrastructure and buildings, and purchase of energy efficient equipment and vehicles.
3. The Town has a manual system for tracking of energy usage and costs.
4. The Town has limited capacity to raise funds (i.e. grant proposal writing) to implement energy efficiency and conservation projects.
5. The Town currently has no regulatory measures or voluntary incentives to ensure energy efficiency for new and existing private (residential) and municipal construction.

6. Vehicular traffic increases significantly during the summer months, contributing to air pollution and energy consumption.
7. In order to reach long-term energy conservation goals, the town must consider the infrastructure necessary to support energy production and delivery systems.

The NCEC will continue to work with town officials and the Planning Board to ultimately develop a long-term energy plan for the Town.

The NCEC urges the Board of Selectmen to endorse the “Energy Chapter of the Master Plan” and recommends that it be taken forward to the Planning Board for incorporation into the Town Master Plan.

Respectfully,

New Castle Energy Committee

Chair of NCEC – Sandra Bisset

NCEC Members:

cc: Rockingham Planning Commission, Clean Air-Cool Planet

# Master Plan

## ***DRAFT*** **ENERGY CHAPTER**

### **TOWN of NEW CASTLE** **New Hampshire**

**2009**

## **Draft ENERGY CHAPTER for the MASTER PLAN**

### **PART I PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Energy Chapter is to provide recommendations designed to reduce energy consumption and costs, improve energy infrastructure, increase use of local energy resources, enhance environmental quality and provide a framework for future energy planning in the community.

### **PART II ROLE OF THE NEW CASTLE ENERGY COMMITTEE (NCEC)**

The New Castle Energy Committee (NCEC) was adopted by the New Castle Town Selectmen in December of 2007. The New Castle Selectmen adopted the following motion creating the New Castle Energy Committee:

“The objective of the Committee will be to develop recommendations to save energy and reduce emissions through changes to building design and renovation procurement, landscape, water, waste, transportation and productivity.” Every distinct committee initiative must generate cash financial returns that exceed the cost of the recommendation.

The role of the NCEC is to advise the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board on energy conservation and energy efficient strategies.

The goals of the NCEC are to:

- Coordinate energy conservation activities among federal, State, and Local officials, town departments, zoning and planning boards, town committees, elementary school, businesses, residents, and other community groups or activities;
- Work with town officials to develop a capital improvement plan that includes the energy conservation strategies and emission reductions;
- Develop a comprehensive energy plan or strategies for the town;
- Identify for the town the cost savings, Return on Investment (ROI), as well as a payment structure over the useful life of the equipment/systems/product. Evaluate reductions in energy use and emissions;
- Identify sources of funding including regional, state and federal grants, and organize fundraising activities;

- Recommend revisions and/or the development of regulatory and planning documents; and
- Coordinate outreach and awareness activities in the community.

## **PART III RECOMMENDATIONS**

The NCEC has developed the following recommendations for the New Castle Town to implement:

### Community Facilities

1. Provide input and recommendations regarding the town's budget process and appropriation of funds for municipal construction and energy conservation projects.
2. Develop funding sources and fundraising opportunities to implement energy efficiency improvements and energy conservation strategies for municipal buildings.
3. Implement a tracking system which consolidates energy use records to better evaluate and manage energy costs for the town.
4. Investigate the potential for installation of energy efficient pumps for the community sewer system and alternative energy systems to power them.
5. Evaluate the current lighting (streets, buildings, offices, New Castle Common, businesses, non-municipal etc.), and develop replacement plan to ensure energy savings.

### Land Use

6. Revise and/or develop zoning ordinances and regulations to allow alternative energy production including but not limited to installation of wind, solar and geothermal systems.

### Housing

7. Revise regulations and building codes to provide voluntary incentives to achieve energy efficiency for new construction and existing buildings and infrastructure.

### Transportation

8. Evaluate bicycle and pedestrian improvements and or controls, and provide alternative transportation options to reduce vehicle use and vehicle emissions.

### Utilities

9. Investigate opportunities to develop individual and community energy systems and energy distribution networks. This may include a consolidated energy system for the municipal complex.

### Community

10. Develop an Energy Conservation Strategy for the community addressing municipal, private, school, business and residential interests. Prioritize actions based on results of the energy inventory and energy consumption profile developed for the town.
11. Conduct outreach and education in the community focused on energy efficiency and conservation and emission reductions.
12. Develop a volunteer services network to provide assistance in the community to implement energy efficient strategies and installations.
13. Reduce the overall carbon footprint of the community.
14. Coordinate activities with other Local Energy Committees.