

Village of Silverton  
Community Strategic Energy Plan  
Steering Committee Meeting  
10/25/18 7:00

**Meeting Notes**

**Attendees:**

Tom Carroll, Village Manager  
Dottie Williams, Councilwoman  
Ben Wichner, Silverton Resident  
Dolline Colter, Silverton Resident  
Bob Stroup, Silverton Resident  
Josh Jansen, Silverton Resident  
Rene Townley, Silverton Resident  
Rob Schmuelling, Silverton Resident  
Andy Meyer, OKI Regional Council of Governments  
Rob McCracken, Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance  
Kevin Tolan, Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance

1. Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves. Mr. Meyer provided background on the Energy Plan Project and its goals.

2. Outline the Planning Process

Mr. Meyer provided an overview of the process, including public participation, Village facilities assessment, and the process of drafting, reviewing, and adopting the plan.

3. Discussion of Broader Planning Issues in Silverton

Mr. Meyer asked those present to talk about the important attributes of Silverton and issues it might be facing, whether there might be a connection to energy or not. Those listed were:

- Diversity – in age, race, background, and economics
- Trees – keeping mature trees and planting new ones
- Development – serves as both positive and negative. Expands and diversifies the tax base, but not all proposed development reinforces desired community character.
- Rush of young families moving in is a positive
- The higher density and walkability – some gaps in sidewalk on south side of village
- Diversity of businesses – most anything you need is available in town
- Housing is affordable
- Emphasis on sustainability – tree giveaways, recycling, renewable energy purchase.

- Improved parks and events
- Recent investments in street rehab
- Municipal services are great for such a small place
- Small town feel – know your neighbors and community officials
- New and expanding businesses – new office building, brewery, UDF. Need a nicer sit-down dining option.

#### 4. Discussion of Energy Plan Materials Packet

Mr. Meyer turned the group's attention to the packet of data and analysis provided to the group prior to the meeting. Discussion ensued about the meaning of the natural gas use by residential in the village. Natural gas is used primarily for heating, and is thus seasonally occurring. There were questions about where Silverton ranked with a typical community on a per-household usage basis, and also what the CO<sup>2</sup> impact is of electricity vs natural gas. Also, recalculate cost of energy using the Village's Aggregation Agreement price.

Mr. Meyer noted that bus ridership in the village was lower than peer communities and the county as a whole, which he found surprising given the level of service in the village. Reasons offered were that less people work downtown, the busses don't travel the residential streets anymore, and Silverton is located in Zone 2 where the cost is higher.

There was discussion about the connection between the Urban Heat Island Effect and trees, particularly trees located near parking lots and roadways where they serve to shade them from absorbing the midday sun. It was pointed out the return on investment of street trees, given the time it takes for the trees to mature, would be rather poor. Mr. Meyer suggested the energy benefit comes in addition to the economic development and aesthetic reasons for including street trees in a streetscape project.

Energy burden and equity was discussed. The village's aggregation agreement lowers the cost of energy available for residents and businesses. It was pointed out that those affected by higher energy burden also tend to live in the oldest, and least energy efficient housing. This housing also tends to be rental housing, which isn't reached by most traditional home efficiency programs due to the split incentive problem. Mr. Carroll stated that of the options listed for addressing energy efficiency in rental housing, incentives were the only feasible option.

#### 5. Discussion of Options for Public Outreach

Mr. Meyer said one of the key features of the planning process will be multi-faceted public outreach using social media, surveys, and in-person interactions. He asked if there were specific community groups that would be key to reach out to. It was suggested to reach out to the Neighborhood Block Watch. Given there are no upcoming village events to engage with residents, it was decided to hold a public meeting for the energy plan in January. Notice of the meeting will be in the Village's December newsletter.

Mr. Schmuelling requested the group spend time crafting a mission statement. Mr. Meyer noted that the time left in the meeting was short and he suggested that he would take the groups feedback and draft a mission statement for the group to react to. He would also draft some survey questions for the group's review and comment. Mr. Carroll suggested a survey question regarding the Village's Aggregation Program – "Would you prefer to maximize the cost savings, or would you be willing to save a bit less money, but purchase only 100% renewable energy?"

6. Discussion of Focus for Facility Assessment

Mr. Meyer said that another part of the planning process is a facility assessment coordinated by the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance. He pointed out the recent completion of extensive renovations to the Village Administration Building and inquired if the Village had any older buildings that would benefit more from an assessment. Mr. Carroll noted there is a service garage, but the options to make meaningful improvements might be limited. Mr. Meyer pointed out that the largest energy expense for nearly all communities is streetlights. He inquired if the Village is interested in investigating the return on investment of converting the streetlights to LED. Mr. Carroll agreed.

7. Final thoughts / questions

Mr. Meyer asked if there was other aspects of energy the group would like to explore. Mr. Carroll noted that he'd like to investigate the carbon footprint of food waste and craft a public education product. He suggested contacting the Hamilton County Solid Waste District for information. He also suggested gathering information on loftier goals, such as "What would it take for Silverton to be compliant with the Paris Accord?"