

Proposal: Chilmark Sustainable Energy Committee

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In December 2015, representatives from more than 180 nations meeting in Paris approved plans to reduce fossil fuel emissions significantly as an initial step toward limiting the extent of anthropogenic climate change. In order to achieve the promise of the Paris accord, grass-roots efforts and community action will be an important adjunct to national policy initiatives.

Mission

The mission of the proposed Chilmark Sustainable Energy Committee (CSEC) is to address opportunities at the town and community level to advance energy savings and efficiency and accelerate the adoption of renewable energy sources in order to significantly lower our carbon footprint. The CSEC would operate cooperatively with other Island towns and key groups such as the Cape Light Compact / CVEC and Vineyard Power, and the Martha's Vineyard Commission.

Specific committee activities would include:

- Providing planning and policy advice to the selectmen and other town committees and departments, including the development of an overall Chilmark energy plan;
- Implementing education and outreach programs for the community regarding sustainable energy technologies; and
- Developing and sponsoring group buying and green energy campaigns in areas such as:
 - Residential and commercial energy efficiency;
 - Energy use audits;
 - Residential solar installations;
 - Residential heat pumps; and
 - Electric vehicles for the Island.

Structure

The CSEC would report to the Selectmen; 5 committee members should suffice (appointed by the Selectmen; 3-year terms). The committee will hold monthly meetings, keep formal minutes, and issue an annual report.

Funding

Funding requirements for ordinary committee activities should be minimal. State and other grants will be sought for more ambitious programs (e.g., residential weatherization, residential solar group buying campaign).

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