

## Wendell Energy Committee Annual Report, 2024

The year 2024 continued to be a period of transition for the committee. With many town energy projects successfully completed, the committee began the year 2024 with Anna Gyorgy as new chair after the long and successful leadership of Laurie DiDonato. Laurie remains as a key committee member, along with Don Stone and 2024 new member Jim Thornley. One position remains to be filled.

The year started with a focus on the major energy related facility proposed for Wendell, the New Leaf Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), originally brought before the Planning Board in 2002. After much citizen opposition to the project, including the overwhelmingly positive May 1 special town meeting vote for a General Bylaw to regulate such projects, on August 6, 2024, New Leaf withdrew its application to the Dept. of Public Utilities.

A graduate student working with the Renewable Energy Clinic at MIT contacted the committee and others in town inviting participation in analysis of decision-making around siting of energy facilities. Member Laurie DiDonato participated in several meetings, and others joined in a webinar on the subject. A final report is expected.

Member Don Stone continued research on solar electric and storage possibilities for homeowners and the Wendell Country Store. He developed a list of local solar installers, which was shared during Old Home Day and is [posted](#) on the Wendell EnCom website.

On September 21st, the Energy Committee successfully shared a booth for the second year at Wendell's Old Home Day with the Open Space Committee. Energy Committee members distributed Community Action flyers, had conversations, and handed out the list of solar suppliers in the area.

Ashley Penna continued to be a very productive clerk and assistant during the year, providing the group with excellent minutes, and plans for expanding the committee's presence on the new town website.

Towards the end of the year, the Committee discussed the idea of broadening the scope of the committee to include education and action on climate issues in general, energy saving and production being one of those.

To further this idea and discussion, the committee decided to organize a Feb. 2 Groundhog Day community meeting, as had been done in 2017-19. Active town committees, citizen groups and local projects related to climate and energy were to be invited. That event took place on February 2, 2025, and was considered a success, with interesting and relevant presentations, information and discussion. That event closed out the project work for 2024.

Anna Gyorgy, Wendell Energy Committee chair, February 3, 2025