

MELROSE ENERGY COMMISSION

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Created in 2005, the Melrose Energy Commission is a group of Melrose citizens who are volunteering their time to help the city and its residents save energy. MEC members have diverse and extensive experience in areas pertaining to energy usage, efficiency and policy.

GOALS

The Commission is working with city officials to:

- Save taxpayers money by helping to reduce energy consumed by city facilities and functions
- Educate Melrose residents about energy savings and efficiency opportunities

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Solar panels at Melrose Middle School

The Melrose Energy Commission worked with city officials to obtain a \$340,000 Massachusetts Technology Collaborative grant for a 30-kilowatt photovoltaic panel at the school.

Purchase of city streetlights

After conducting an extensive economic analysis of Melrose's streetlights, the MEC recommended to city officials that the streetlights be purchased directly from National Grid. The purchase is expected to be closed in early 2008. By purchasing – rather than leasing – these lights, Melrose stands to realize an annual net savings of about \$100,000.

Accruing more than \$10,000 in state funds for renewable energy projects

By promoting the state's Clean Energy Choice program, the Commission enlisted more than 100 Melrose households to contribute monthly payments (through their utility bills) in support of renewable energy. These contributions have earned Melrose more than \$10,000 in matching state funds that will further promote renewable energy through equipment (such as photovoltaic panels), consumer education and building analysis.

Energy education in Melrose schools

Using funds from the Clean Energy Choice matching grant, two Melrose Middle School teachers – Nancy Naslas and Eric DiAntonio – were able to attend July's National Energy Education Development (NEED) curriculum training seminar in Washington, D.C. The teachers reported back to the MEC to explain how they are incorporating the lessons from the training into their existing curricula.

In addition, the Melrose Energy Commission helped secure \$500 from KeySpan Energy to fund the cost of NEED curriculum materials for the public schools.

Melrose enlists in EPA's Community Energy Challenge and U.S. Mayors Climate Agreement

Identifying these initiatives as excellent opportunities for energy savings in city buildings, the MEC worked with Mayor Dolan to enlist Melrose in these EPA and state-sponsored programs.

Through these programs, Melrose and other New England cities are benchmarking the energy usage of city and school buildings, and then committing to an energy reduction of at least 10 percent.

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Melrose Energy Fair

The MEC organizes and manages the annual Melrose Energy Fair, an event designed to create public awareness about opportunities for energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy audits and financial assistance for low-income families.

First held in December 2005, the fair provides hands-on demonstrations and information for consumers. Exhibitors include local retailers, contractors and utility representatives.

The third annual Melrose Energy Fair was held Nov. 11, 2007, at Memorial Hall, drawing a record crowd of more than 200 area residents.

Consumer education

The MEC regularly contributes stories to the *Melrose Free Press* and *Melrose Weekly News* about energy-saving opportunities for consumers. Through these media outlets, the Commission also keeps Melrose residents informed about energy-efficiency projects undertaken by the city.

In addition, the MEC offers presentations about energy efficiency at local venues, such as the Melrose Public Library and Milano Senior Center.

The MEC has also facilitated free public access to energy-savings documents at City Hall.

Energy audit of city buildings

In coordination with the School Department and Department of Public Works, the MEC has initiated an inventory of energy consumption in city buildings. The objective of this project is to establish baseline levels which can be used in developing energy-efficiency opportunities. In conjunction with this effort, the MEC has arranged for an accelerated scheduling of energy audits for city buildings by National Grid. The Commission is also investigating other energy audit opportunities, including grants from the state and energy performance contracting.

FUTURE PROJECTS

Working with city officials, National Grid and other organizations, the Melrose Energy Commission is exploring the following energy-efficiency opportunities:

- State funding for efficiency projects
- Insulation and weatherization retrofit of city buildings
- Bio-fuels for city facilities, equipment and vehicles
- Evaluation of wind energy projects
- Renewable energy projects
- Memorial Hall HVAC upgrade
- Solar-powered lights, irrigation system for Ell Pond Park
- Water-efficiency projects
- Distribution of "smart meters" to residents

For further information or to volunteer or, contact the MEC at melroseenergy@yahoo.com or 781-662-2616.