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7/6/2022 meeting of SIerraClub NJ Chapter Legislative Committee (personal notes of Steve Miller)

10 participants (including Pat and Steve Miller who joined at 8PM to gain Sierra Club support of the Building Electrification bills)

We started with a general review of our two Building Electrification bills. These notes focus on take-aways.

**A1440 (Kennedy) “Zero Energy Construction Act”.** Our proposed bill is an amendment to A1440. We are closing on final wording. HOWEVER, we would like to mesh (in terms, definitions, dates) with the NEEP proposal for “Zero Energy Roadmap”, which Is in internal discussion (BPU, DCA Building Codes, Gov. Murphy’s “climate office” and Jennifer Senick (Ex Dir, Rutgers Center for Green Building) who manages a BPU contract employing NEEP (consultant) to develop a “Zero Energy Roadmap”. This roadmap proposes “stretch codes” as a stepping stone to “Zero Energy Ready” and “Zero Energy Building” in the next 3 year cycle of the NJ Uniform Construction Code (UCC). The NJ UCC will likely be published in September, 2022 (Sept 3 2019 was the code release date for the previous 3 year cycle). A “Zero Energy Ready” UCC would mesh perfectly with our A1440 Amendment, which requires, by Oct, 2025, that all new construction meet “Zero Energy Building” requirements. We are continuing to fine-tune the A1440 amendment, but temporarily halting further attempts to sell the bill until we know the planned NJ UCC to be released in Sept, 2022.

Everyone will watch for evidence of deploying (or not) the NEEP “Zero Energy Roadmap” within the NJ UCC. Anjuli commented that Catherine Klinger, Sr. Policy Advisor,-reporting to Jane Cohen – is Jane’s “Building Electrification” manager in the “Climate Office”. Although Anjuli Ramos-Busot meets regularly with Jane Cohen, Anjuli stated they do not get into details required to inform our proposed Amendment to A1440.

Steve then discussed, verbally, the “**Building Electrification Act**”. The group thought the bill was excellent. At discussion end, the Legislative Committee voted unanimously to support the bill. The group discussed several possible sponsors. Sen Zwicker is best candidate. Steve already is communicating with Senator Zwicker’s staff who had requested copies of the bills for discussion. Steve will forward the bills with special focus on “Building Electrification Act”, and suggest that we (including Mike Winka) meet with Sen. Zwicker’s legislative aid to begin discussion. Also, John Kashwick jkashwick@gmail.com is running for office in Clinton, NJ. Sen Zwicker’s district is adding 4 towns, including Clinton, and plans a meet and greet on Aug 4. This might be an opportunity to meet informally on Aug 4, with Sen Zwicker, who will be visiting Clinton on August 4.

ADDENDUM: NOTES from discussion of these bills during the July 9 Executive Committee meeting of the NJ Chapter of Sierra Club:

1. Kip Cherry: many customers cant afford the initial cost. Also, Kip believes that most all her various attempts for rebates have never been paid for various reasons.
2. Denise Brush: Expects a big problem with paperwork which must be submitted to get the money.
3. Summary: Kip and Denise questioned the viability and equity of the fee.
4. Steve’s take: the “Summary” should emphasize the equity provisions of the BE Act. The Bill requires the BPU to survey customer affordability, etc. Also, existing BPU programs can be leveraged: “Clean Energy Program, zero interest loans /special programs for LMI customers. ZERO out of pocket programs for REALLY low income NJ residents). Steve will bring up these issues in both informal and formal meetings planned with the NJ BPU.

Another potential sponsor: Sierra Club has some ties with Sen Brian Stack, Mayor of Union, a major urban area with high density residential housing.

Steve Miller