

Greetings everyone,

We have been getting so busy with committee work that members have begun emailing me wondering when an update will be forthcoming. My apologies that this is so long overdue! We have moved from measuring interest in our community to focusing on committee work to find the best solutions for residential solar in our city. Our committee has made considerable progress in the last couple of months, and I will attempt to summarize the highlights below.

Since April our Executive committee had 3 main meetings. After thoughtful and careful deliberation at these meetings we have come to the following group consensus:

- 1. Our mission shall be primarily action oriented in nature.** While advocacy and education will remain key in expanding our organization and audience, we have chosen to focus primarily on finding the best solar solution, creating key partnerships, engaging in pilot projects, and ultimately offering our general membership what we believe to be the best value in a solution for our city. We believe that action in terms of establishing solar as mainstream power source in our community is the strongest form of advocacy available to our organization.
- 2. We will pursue both a single residence (or business) based bulk purchase model and a co-op based purchase model.** We aim to have our individual-bulk-purchase solution ready by the fall of this year, with the goal to actually begin general installations by spring 2008. We will be aiming at a 2-3 year window to find a solution for the co-op model because of the complex organizational structure involved.
- 3. Our name shall simply be 'Guelph Solar',** reflecting a shift away from 'advocacy' towards a 'solution-and-action' based organizational philosophy.
- 4. At this time we will focus exclusively on solar PV and solar hot water solutions for residences and businesses.**
- 5. We have created 2 subcommittees: the technical subcommittee and the community engagement subcommittee.** The technical subcommittee is dedicated to finding the best technical solar solutions for our local climate at the best price. The technical subcommittee is also responsible for working with our pilot project partners. The community engagement committee is responsible for cultivating municipal, community, and corporate partnerships, as well as public relations work and writing grant applications.
- 6. We have agreed (and are fortunate) to partner with Terraview Homes to assist with a local pilot solar power system.** Terraview Homes will subsidize the project, while Guelph Solar will provide the technical solution and aid in vendor selection. Guelph Hydro will be donating a meter for the project. The project will serve as a pilot project for both Terraview Homes and Guelph Solar. For Guelph Solar, it means that we will have solar PV selection, purchase, and installation experience under our belts as we prepare for the much larger purchase. We thank Andrew Lambden of Terraview home for his support and enthusiasm, and for providing us this timely opportunity!

**Timeline:** The following is an **approximate timeline of goals for our organization** for the next year:

**Summer, 2007:** Find an initial solution that combines the value of technical craftsmanship and efficiency with cost effectiveness. Work with Terraview Homes to complete the pilot project.

**September-October 2007:** Having completed the pilot project, review our solution and adjust as required. We will then build a web based calculator that will allow home and business owners to enter parameters such as available south facing roof space and roof angle from south, to find the maximum power generation potential and approximate cost.

**November-December 2007:** Engage in one final drive for membership and obtain commitments from members based on solid costs.

**January 2008:** Send out our bulk purchase RFP to the solar installation companies with equipment that meet our technical requirements.

**February 2008:** Announce RFP results to our members and begin scheduling installations.

**March 2008:** Begin installations.

**Spring/Summer 2008:** Observe and assess installations, plan for co-op phase of our project.

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**Community Partnerships:** Interest by potential community partners continues to grow. We are fortunate to have ongoing support from Guelph Hydro Electric, who have donated a meter for our pilot project. Municipal staff and councillors also continue to support our project, and it was brought to my attention that Guelph's Community Energy Plan calls for 1000 solar systems to be installed over the next several years, a key opportunity for our organization to work with the municipality. In addition, our organization continues to engage in dialogue with the Guelph Sun Park project, and other potential key partners. In addition to Terraview Homes, Seaton Group Developments have also expressed interest in solar applications on new homes, and has even inquired about a possible 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot project.

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**Ontario Sustainable Energy Association:** Guelph Solar has become a member of the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA), and is a founding member of quarterly solar roundtable discussions. These discussions bring together associations like ours from around the province, as well as experts in the field of solar energy, and invite the sharing of best practices and other experiences valuable to community based solar energy initiatives.

**Solar Hot Water:** Unfortunately our initial investigation in to solar hot water has proven to be more expensive than we first thought. We will continue to investigate solar hot water companies over the summer and have more information, along with our solar PV findings, in the fall.

**Guelph Solar Forum:** The Guelph Solar spam problem has been solved (it is now my email box that is getting all of it!). For those of you with questions you would like answered right away it should be the first place you begin. Our committee members are regularly on the forum. Because of the spam, you must now register using part or all of your real name, and I must manually approve you before you can post.

**Earth Expo 360:** On April 21 Guelph Solar participated as an Ecomarket exhibitor. Interest was quite strong, and we managed to sign up another 40 interested residents. The committee wishes to thank the following people for their volunteer efforts in making the booth possible: **John Buttars, Grant Robertson, Anne Hendrie, and Bill Hulet. Thanks for your hard work!**

**FOR THOSE WITH QUESTIONS:** We have received many questions and will be working throughout the summer to come up with answers to as many as possible and posting the answers to an online FAQ. If you would like immediate answers, please post your questions to our forum, as our committee members check regularly.

Thanks to everyone for your support and your patience as we set the wheels in motion for the implementation phase of this exciting initiative. Please expect our next update towards the end of September. For the latest news, please visit the Guelph Solar forums.

**I wish to finally add that all of the work above would not have been possible without the capable and efficient work of our committee members!**

Thanks everyone, have a great summer. **As always, please forward this email to anyone you think might be interested!**

On behalf of the Guelph Solar Committee,

Mark Bailey