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OCTOBER 6, 2016

otherpapervt.com

VOLUME 40, NO. 39

Progress with City-Owned Buildings

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South Burlington has a tradition of investing in energy efficiency to lower the costs of operating municipal buildings; saving tax payer dollars via lowered operating costs. In 2016, it invested in new efficient heating systems for Fire Station 1 on Dorset Street and Fire Station 2 on Holmes Road. The project will be completed before the winter heating season. Justin Rabidoux, Public Works Director and City Engineer, has led the project for South Burlington.

The impetus for these energy improvements comes from the Georgetown University Energy Prize Competition, of which South Burlington is a participant. The campaign to understand and reduce municipal and residential energy of both electricity and natural gas use resulted in a partnership between South Burlington and a new type of company, Commons Energy—with an objective of making efficiency improvements in municipally owned buildings. Commons Energy offers a comprehensive approach to reducing energy of all kinds for owners of small to medium-sized buildings that serve a public purpose. These range from multifamily affordable housing to education facilities, to health care buildings, to community and municipal facilities. These buildings' owners typically have difficulty accessing sufficient amounts of capital to make building energy improvements, and frequently do not have the specific technical skills to do the work of implementing the complex, interconnected solutions for "total energy" improvements.



The Georgetown University Energy Prize challenges communities to demonstrate efficiency impacts in a sustainable and scalable way. By working with Commons Energy and building on a strong foundation of the city's long-standing commitment to energy efficiency, South Burlington is offering a model for similarly sized cities to replicate.

Other examples of South Burlington's efficiency projects:

2010: Police station efficient lighting upgrades

2012: City Hall efficient lighting upgrades

2012: Airport Parkway wastewater treatment facility: many energy improvements, including installation of a micro-turbine that converts waste methane gas to electricity, which then powers the facility's operations.

2013: City Hall efficient HVAC upgrades

2014: Municipal street lighting LED upgrades

2015: Municipal buildings LED interior lighting fixture upgrades

2016: Municipal buildings LED interior fixtures and ventilation upgrades

2016: LED Traffic Signal upgrades

South Burlington and Commons Energy have planned more projects for 2017. The ongoing energy savings from the completed projects are expected to continue to reduce the costs of operating South Burlington's municipal buildings, well beyond 2016.