

Cook County Local Energy Project Transportation Working-Group 2/11/09 Meeting Summary

Present: George Wilkes, Jonathan Hedstrom, Shae Kosmalski, Harris Mills, Mark Spinler, Melinda Spinler, Michael O'Phelan, Rick Schubert.

Jonathan Hedstrom lead a discussion about electric cars in general and his project to retrofit a suburu with electric drive. Converting cars to electric drive is fairly straightforward but battery technologies are a limiting factor in price, performance, and range. It will be two or three years before true plug-in electric vehicles are available commercially, but gas/electric hybrids on the market now offer substantial increased fuel efficiency. It should also be noted that electric powered vehicles would not reduce carbon emissions unless the source of the electricity is carbon neutral.

Jonathan hopes to have his electric car operational this spring. Links to websites about electric powered vehicles are listed at the CCLEP website: www.cookcountylep.org.

Shae Kosmalski, Head of our Cook County Highway Department lead a discussion about the highway department's role in energy-efficient transportation, specifically the Complete Streets program (www.completestreets.org) and the Transportation Enhancement program of the MN DOT. Shae will keep our group informed of funding opportunities from these and other sources.

A main goal continues to be to assemble a list of possible energy effecient transportation projects. Anyone is encouraged to submit ideas. To see the majority of what has been considered so far see the lists of strategies on the CCLEP website at www.cookcountylep.org (click on transportation). Beginning to prioritize those possible projects will be the focus of our next meeting.

It was decided to try for regular meetings on the first Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at the 4H building in the Community Center compound.