

## VECAN 2022 Workshop Series: GreenSavingSmart March 3, 2022

### **Resources**

Kelsey Gibb, Financial & Energy Coaching Statewide Team Lead, Capstone Community Action:

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GreenSavingSmart Website: <https://www.greensavingsmart.org/>

Community Action Agency contact information: <https://vermontcap.org/>

### **Introductions**

Lauri Scharf: Lauri Scharf, Middlesex Energy Committee

Liz Scharf: Liz Scharf Capstone Community Action

Stephen Dotson: Stephen Dotson - Town of Brattleboro Sustainability Coordinator, staffing the Energy Committee

Ann Lawless: Ann Lawless, HEAT Squad NEK outreach

Richard Shappy: Rick Shappy HEAT Squad

Bridget Ashe: Bridget Ashe, VEIC

Michael Oman: Michael Oman Underhill EC

anna guenther: Anna Guenther, Vital Communities - Hello!

Jeff Forward: Jeff Forward, Richmond Climate Action Committee

Diane Foulds: Diane Foulds, Windsor Energy Committee

Darrell Greene: Darrell Greene @ BROOC Community action Rutland

Sam Lash: Sam Lash, CVRPC

Anna Fitzgibbons: Hi... Anna Fitzgibbons, Efficiency Vermont

Christine Anderson: Chris Anderson, Manchester Center, Earth Matters (350vt group)

Maryann Zavez: Hi Everyone! Maryann Zavez, Randolph Energy Committee

### **Q&A**

Spence Putnam: Who finances these coaches? How many clients per coach?

nancy detra: weatherization: Window Dressers programs across state offer insulating window inserts at low or no cost

Linda Gray, Norwich Energy Comm: are the coaches in place at each of the 5 agencies?

Darrell Greene: :) Happy to be here.

Ann Janda, CCRPC: How are people referred to the program?

Yves Gonnet: What is your web address?

<https://www.greensavingsmart.org/>

Richard Shappy: Are 120% eligible for weatherization from CAP?

Liz Scharf-Capstone Community Action: @richard 80% AMI (Area Media Income) for WAP services from Community Action agencies

Diane Foulds: You mentioned that often, people are too busy to negotiate assisting institutions. No time to see a coach. How can this organization go to them?

Stephen Dotson: Will this program support people who wish to be involved in the coming Community-Scale Renewable Energy Program for Low-Income Vermonters? I'm hoping to find support to gather low-income folks into group net metering arrangements and so forth.

Jessica Williams: How would an organization like WindowDressers get on the radar of the coaches as a service to offer clients.

Darrell Greene: I think WindowDressers are already on the radar for us coaches

Christine Anderson: How will you inform people of this program, other than webinars? Are there brochures to hand out at laundromats, food cupboards, etc?

Fran and Spence Putnam: How about people who are renters? How will you help them with weatherization, for example?

Michael Oman: Here in Underhill we have \*relatively\* lower proportion of severe financial probs. Can we use this program to promote energy improvements more generally & how?

Liz Scharf-Capstone Community Action: @ Michael Oman: the income guidelines are followed to determine who can use the program--it really is designed for low-moderate income. I would refer them to Efficiency VT. We ask people to self-certify their income, but as you can hear from Laurie, we need the information about their personal finances to help them.

Diane Foulds: If it's not off-topic, is the MileageSmart program starting a push to provide EVs to multi-unit dwellings that cater to low- and moderate-income residents?

Liz Scharf-Capstone Community Action: @ Diane: Mileagesmart is for used hybrid or EVs that get 40 mpg or higher--and there is a dearth of used cars right now, so we have lots of people who have been approved but are having trouble finding a car. As you know, most apartments do not have charging stations for their tenants--so we suggest hybrid for folks who don't have access to charging ports.

Jeffrey Gephart: If the CAP programs focus on the participant's goals how do you ensure that WX work goes deep enough to ensure we're not just kicking the energy burden down the road?

Jeffrey Gephart: Can LIHEAP identify potential participants?

Liz Scharf-Capstone Community Action: @ Jeffrey--there's confidentiality issues around accessing LIHEAP participants, but in short, we want to make that connection--we may have to do it within each Community Action Agency who works with LIHEAP participants. Also, our WAP (Weatherization Assistance Programs) at the CAPs have a certain amount of money per home enrolled and tasks that they do to maximize the weatherization of a home--many houses are very old and suffer from deferred maintenance, old heating systems--and so we do what we can to button up houses and reduce the amount of fuel used to heat the house.

Sue Minter: Wanted to clarify that all the eligibility guidelines of these programs that the CAPs run are established by the federal and state (and NOT the Community Action Agencies!)

Sue Minter: We are working to try to (lobby to) simplify and unify the eligibility guidelines for programs for climate and equity. As you can see, it is deeply inequitable that low income folks need to go through

many hoops to determine they are eligible, while higher income folks can "self-certify". This is a real problem and part of the structural inequities we confront in our work...

Diane Foulds: Are there still major backlogs in low-income weatherization requests at Capstone and the other five agencies? Is there a long wait?

Liz Scharf-Capstone Community Action: @ Diane--no the wait is not nearly as long as it used to be--a few weeks to a month depending on the agency.

### **Breakout Room Reflections & Final Questions**

Diane Foulds: Shame - that I'm not yet heating 100% of my home with heat pumps.

Diane Foulds: To Liz: I read (in Seven Days, I think?) that some Chittenden County multi-unit apt dwelling had received two Chevy Bolts for all tenants to share. Was that a freak occurrence or part of an evolving state-wide project? I'm working like crazy to get a property owner of our three multi-unit apt houses to agree to a grant for charging stations at their dwellings, but they're still on the fence. This Chevy Bolt idea might convince them that yes, their tenants WANT these.

Liz Scharf-Capstone Community Action: also, I just got clarity that our WAP program has minimum requirements of weatherization work that have to be met according to a tech manual

Yves Gonnet: or education

Yves Gonnet: we noted food insecurity

Ann Lawless, HEAT Squad: What are you planning for sharing information for referrals? For example, will a counselor make the call to the WAP on the client's behalf, or does the client need to make the call?

Liz Scharf-Capstone Community Action: CVOEO is higher AMI in three counties--folks should contact their Community Action agency for specifics on eligibility

Lauren Wentz: Want to quickly call out that the slight difference seen here in the 80% threshold is because the Weatherization Assistance Program uses Area Median Income vs. MFI. Efficiency Vermont also uses Area Median Income. These numbers are updated annually, too.

Darrell Greene: thank you Laurie, great job

Richard Shappy: What timeframe constitutes a "new American"?

Bob Atchinson: Connections: In the past, working for SEOO as statewide energy technician, I discovered that CAP weatherization programs and Fuel Assistance did not share referrals/databases. Also, food shelf dispersals, if still going on, were a way we connected with potential Wx clients in Plainfield/Marshfield/Cabot.

Laurie Kozar: Thank you all for your time!

Bekah Kuster, VECAN: Thanks everyone for joining us! We know it is 1:30, so if you have to go that is fine. We will follow up with an email with all of the resources discussed today.

Darrell Greene: are the Webinar available on VOD?

Diane Foulds: How can we help?

Liz Scharf-Capstone Community Action: FPF posts!

Jeffrey Gephart: Is there text that you could provide for FPF posts?

Bob Atchinson: Any concerns over person power in crews to deliver Wx services?