



Ypsilanti Food Cooperative
312 N. River Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198
734-483-1354
Grant PSC-08-31

September 1 2008 through October 31, 2008

Complete Task

- 10% Expansion of Solar installation at Cooperative
- 10% Installation of Solar panels at City Hall
- 10% Utility meter reading program
- 15% Building of solar.ypsi.com website
- 15% Solar educational outreach

Progress over the past two months

Progress was slow this period while we waited for Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering to finish their review of our design for the back of City Hall. Had one face-to-face meeting with Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering and exchanged several emails. They have finished their review and while our design did not use quite the correct numbers for the loads on the structure, the design is indeed valid and they stamped it. Here is a clip from their letter:

“Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering, PC has reviewed the information presented in the Report: *Ypsilanti Solar Project – City Hall* regarding the proposed installation of the solar panels on the south wall of City Hall. We applaud your presentation of the loadings shown on Appendices C and D.

We have reexamined the applied loadings comparing the loadings found in the standard “Minimum Design Loads for buildings and Other Structures, ASCE Standard 7-05 with your loadings. There are some differences between your presentation and what we determined were applicable loads. However, the end result is that we find that the arrangement and method of attachment to the brick wall is adequate and within the safety factors used for mounting the components to the masonry wall.

For longevity and maintenance of strength, we suggest that you use the Unistrut members manufactured using ASTM A240 Stainless Steel instead of the proposed aluminum members. We suggest that you add a diagonal member under the solar panel

and possibly on the wall between the upright members to provide more rigidity for the mounting frame.”

We have thanked Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering for their work, but they have not invoiced us for the work yet. With a stamped design in hand we appeared before the next HDC (Historic District Commission) meeting to ask for approval of this project. We informed the community about this meeting and several supporters send letters/email to the HDC and about 20 people showed up for the meeting, with about 8 supporters speaking at the meeting. The HDC spend about an hour listening to all the information and approved the project with a vote of 6 to 1. You can see a video of this meeting at <http://ypsinews.com/index.php/200810-video-hdc-approves-solar-project-for-city-hall>

At this HDC meeting we also asked for input about our design to add 30 solar panels to the Cooperative for the grant we won for the bakery. While we were only a study item and seeking feedback on our design, they decided to go ahead and approved the design.

The approval of the project made the local paper.
http://ypsilanticourier.com/stories/102308/loc_20081023002.shtml

With the approval for the project, we have constructed an RFQ to send out to local renewable energy contractors. Again to save time/money we are combining the grant for the Cooperative’s bakery into the RFQ and asking for quotes in 49 (7 coop + 12 city + 30 bakery) panels, 3 inverters and other parts and consulting time. We will send this out on Monday, Nov.3.

We have also spent time modifying the design for City Hall adding the input from the structural engineering letter. We need to put together a parts list and drawings.

The laptop program for reading the utility meters has been put on hold because of other activities. The volunteer working on the website (solar.ypsi.com) has made some progress, but it still needs lots of work.

We continue with our outreach program and gave talks to a total of 89 people during this two-month period. Talks were given to two laid-off auto engineers looking to get into renewable energy careers, a talk was given to 37 people at Wittenberg University, 18 people at University Michigan, 15 people at Washtenaw Community College, and 16 people visited the Cooperative during the National Solar tour. Finally we talked with a local bookstore, Crazy Wisdom, and they will be writing about our projects in their next newsletter and want to schedule a talk at their bookstore in Ann Arbor.

Anticipated energy saving

The Cooperative and City Hall will not see any energy savings until the solar panels are online. Once the utility meter-reading program is working, we’ll be able to see the energy delivery to the buildings and any energy conservation.

Expenditures compared to budget

We have not spent any money during this period.

Noteworthy Accomplishments

Getting HDC's approval is great progress and the last obstacle to this project.

We were awarded the Green Project: Small Scale award by the Michigan Downtown Conference, and the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioner's Environmental Excellence Award: Honorable Mention for our ongoing solar projects.

Risk to the project

While talking to local renewable energy contractors, we learned that with the last bail out bill that was passed by the federal government, they removed the cap on the tax credit for renewable energy. While this is great news for renewable energy, the contractor said that people are buying panels and stock piling parts anticipating the growth in renewable energy business. This may affect our ability to get panels or at least the panels we would like.

Deviations from the Statement of Work

None.

Money Spent in the Past Two Months

None.