



Fredon hears plans to cut electric bills

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FREDON — Representatives from Concord Energy Services and Commercial Utility Consultants — the companies handling the public outreach and bid process for the township's involvement in an energy aggregation program — spent 45 minutes on Tuesday answering questions related to the township's decision to join the Passaic County Energy Cooperative Pricing System.

About 20 residents attended the meeting, which featured a 10-minute YouTube video explaining the Passaic County Energy Cooperative Pricing System and how it works.

Residents asked many questions to gain a better understanding of the process, such as why residents have to opt-out of the program instead of into it, what happens if a resident has solar panels and why the price per kilowatt hour will be less with a third-party supplier than with Jersey Central Power & Light.

According to the representatives, state law requires that the program be opt-out instead of opt-in. Third party suppliers are not able to process the net metering portion of solar credits, meaning residents with solar panels should opt out, and the price per kilowatt hour will be less because unlike JCP&L, a third-party rate is not set by the state.

"JCP&L takes responsibility for the lines, responsibility for the poles, for anything like Sandy coming through, so that is factored into their price," Mayor Carl Lazzaro said. "The third party suppliers don't have to factor all that in."

The presentation also outlined the basics of the program.

After the bidding process is complete and a qualified company is chosen, Jersey Central Power & Light would still be each municipality's electricity provider — still responsible for the delivery of the power, for the power lines that run through town and for billing. But the generation supplier — the company that generates the power — would be a different company, selected through the auction process.

According to the cooperative, the auction for the power suppliers will be held in mid-October. After the auction, the co-op says, each municipality will have an opportunity to accept or reject the bid. If the bid is accepted, a new rate would go into effect 90 days after the auction. If the municipality rejects the bid, nothing changes.

Should a bid be accepted, residents have the option to opt out and remain with their current supplier, the co-op said. Each resident would have 30 days from the end of the auction to do so.

Informational meetings were held in Hardyston on Monday and also in Andover Borough on Tuesday. A pair of meetings will be held in Franklin Borough on Sept. 30 at 10:30 a.m. in the Senior Center, and 6 p.m., at borough hall.