

**Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission
June 14, 2017
Approved June 28, 2017**

Members Present: Joe Iadanza, Jeff French, Dennis Place, Rolf Kielman, John Kiedaisch, Maggie Gordon, Barbara Forauer, James Donegan

Members Absent: Marie Gardener (recently appointed to the PC on 6/8/17)

Public Present: Chuck Reiss

Also Present: Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning), Dawn Morgan (Recording Secretary)

Joe I. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:32 pm.

Agenda Changes: None.

Public Comments for Non-Agenda Items: None.

Regional Energy Plan – feedback requested by the regional planning commission

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is updating the energy chapter of the regional plan pursuant to Act 174. Act 174 (passed in 2016) establishes a new set of voluntary municipal and regional energy standards. If the regional plan meets these standards, recommendations in the plan regarding the siting of renewable energy facilities will carry greater weight (“substantial deference”) in the Public Service Board review process. A revised energy plan will also help advance the State’s comprehensive energy plan goals as well as the region’s energy goals. The CCRPC requested feedback from the Town related to this effort – 1) Comments/questions on the municipal energy guide; 2) Review the State and local constraints that have been identified for siting renewable energy development; 3) Identify locally preferred sites for renewable energy generation.

Joe I. said that there should be something in the plan designating renewable energy credits for Vermont, as opposed to other states. He also said that there should be some understanding in how constraints are weighed, similar to how the Town currently does this in the bylaws. Finally, Joe I. said that he felt the goals in the plan were aggressive, and there should be some sort of community education outreach if the Town is going to be able to achieve them.

Alex W. said that the goals are aspirational and will almost certainly require a change in the marketplace to be achievable. He said that at this point, the CCRPC is just asking for Towns to keep these goals in

mind during their planning. He went on to clarify that the CCRPC is updating the energy plan for Chittenden county, and once complete municipalities within the county can update their own plans accordingly. He said that the methodology used to achieve the goals can be outlined in a future update to the energy chapter in the Town Plan.

Jeff F. asked what the makeup of solar to wind would be and if the Town would be able to meet the criteria, given the data provided by the CCRPC. There was discussion about the usefulness of the data provided in the plan, and the Commission agreed that it would be more useful if the plan provided an ultimate target goal for the Town to reach. Jeff F. said suggested that if the Commission knew the target goal then they could better plan for where solar and wind installations would be installed, perhaps laying out potential sites on a map. There was general discussion about the usefulness of the data provided in the plan.

Alex W. reminded the Commission that at this point the CCRPC is trying to find out what the Town's ideas of constrained areas are. Dennis P. asked if the Town would get credit for private solar fields or the use of heat pumps. There was general discussion about how the Town will know if it is making progress toward its goals, and Chuck R. said that there is a community dashboard available that can be used to get actual data about the town. He said that there could be a town wide survey on efficiency efforts to date, and the data could be fed into the community dashboard so the Town could then be confident in the dashboard data.

Joe I. said that he would prefer to prioritize the least efficient community and business members and plan to implement efficiency measures with them first. There was general discussion about methodologies to achieve the Town's energy goals.

John K. asked if the Town would be able to restrict passage through a constrained area in order to reach a non-constrained area (i.e., project maintenance vehicles after project completion). Alex W. said that there is currently nothing in the bylaws, as they envisioned traditional development where a road is built and then the road is frequently utilized. Alex W. noted that Joe I. had previously suggested minimizing impact on secondary resource areas, and Alex W. suggested requesting restoration of the most possible resource area damaged by a project installation. John K. agreed, saying that "minimizing" could mean re-establishing something close to what was there prior to the project installation. Alex W. asked the Commission to continue thinking about how to define minimal impact on secondary resources.

Rolf K. suggested asking the CCRPC to standardize the statistics, and John K. suggested a graphic illustration.

Alex W. asked the Commission's thoughts on allowing wind on the bigger hills of town. Maggie G. said that she recalled the constraints having to do with wildlife corridors and habitat preservation. She went on to say that there are quite a few areas that are currently accessible and not constrained by steep

slopes. Alex W. said that core wildlife habitat is already represented on the plan map, and developers will be required by the PSB to minimize their impact. Joe I. said that minimizing impact could include the requirement to not separate wildlife area. There was general discussion about ways to minimize impact on core wildlife areas. Alex W. said that if a developer wants to install a project in a constrained area a site-specific assessment will need to be done.

Jeff F. asked about the placement of solar projects. Joe I. said that sites should have natural topography screening them, and general discussion about screening followed. Alex W. said that the Town's screening guidelines could be applicable to solar, and general discussion about preferred solar and wind siting followed. Chuck R. suggested proactively soliciting input from private landowners who may have a preferred site, saying the PSB will recognize them once they are designated as such. General discussion about the suggestion followed.

Minutes of 05/24/17 Meeting: John K. **made a motion to approve the 05/24/17 minutes as drafted.** Rolf K. **seconded the motion.** The Board voted **5-0.** Maggie G., Barbara F. and James D. abstained since they did not attend that meeting.

Other Business & Correspondence

- **Town Plan Update – Selectboard review**

Alex W. noted that the Selectboard finished its initial review of the draft Town Plan, and that he will prepare a track changes version showing the desired edits for the Selectboard to review at their July 6 meeting. John K. asked about the Planning Commission's role at this point. Alex W. said that he will provide the PC with the Selectboard edits, and the PC can provide comments to the Selectboard if desired. Alex W. said the Selectboard will hold two public hearings once the draft is finalized, and that these will likely be in August or September.

- **Dog park update – official map discussion follow-up**

Alex W. updated the Commission on conversations he had with Kathy Gutteriez regarding her efforts to plan for a dog park at Geprags Park. He said that she will be working with the Conservation Commission and is thinking about fundraising ideas.

- **Summer meeting schedule and work plan**

Alex W. discussed the summer work plan for the two major projects the PC is working on – i.e., housekeeping changes to the zoning and subdivision regulations; village growth rezoning. He said that he will put together a community survey about village growth rezoning, and the Commission discussed the remaining discussion bullet points: design standards, density incentives and project phasing.

- **Notice – Huntington Town Plan & Regulation revisions, June 26 hearing and wetland impact permit application, VTrans intersection improvement project, Route 116, Shelburne Falls Road, CVU Road**

Notices were received/acknowledged for a hearing on revisions to the Huntington Town Plan and regulations, and a wetland impact permit application related to the VTrans intersection improvement project at Route 116, Shelburne Falls Road, and CVU Road. Alex W. said that VTrans will also replace three downstream culverts (under Ballard’s Corner Road, Pleasant View Lane, and Shelburne Falls Road) as part of the project. He said this will help solve intermittent drainage and flooding issues in the Ballard’s Corner and Pleasant View Lane neighborhood.

Joe I. **made a motion to adjourn the meeting.** Jeff F. **seconded the motion.** The Commission voted **8-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Morgan, Recording Secretary