

ENHANCED ENERGY PLANNING WORKING GROUP

NORWICH ENERGY COMMITTEE NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION DRAFT Meeting Minutes Tuesday, December 4, 2018, Tracy Hall

Regular Meeting

Members Present: Linda Gray (NEC Chair), Melissa Horwitz (PC), Aaron Lamperti (NEC)

Others/Guests: Linda Cook (SB), Charlie Lindner (NEC volunteer)

Clerk: Linda Gray

Staff: Rod Francis

Linda Gray, of the Norwich Energy Commission, called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM

1. **Approve Agenda** - Approved by those present
2. **Comments from the Public** - None
3. **Minutes** – 10-2-18 – Approved by those present
4. **Announcements, Reports, Updates & Correspondence** - None
5. **Continued review of Act 174 Checklist and the current Town Plan Energy Chapter**
 - a. Rod Francis had compared the draft Energy Chapter prepared by Aaron Lamperti with the Energy Planning Standards for Municipal Plans (from the Dept. of Public Service). The Standards are basically a checklist for Town Plans that aim to qualify for "substantial deference" in PUC proceedings. Linda Gray had circulated the current draft from the Hartford Energy Commission.
 - b. Regarding energy topics that also fall in other chapters of the Town Plan (ex: transportation and land use), Rod suggested incorporating them in the Energy chapter, so that everything that relates to the Standards is in that chapter, even if that does mean duplication with the other chapters. Last spring, Susan Hardy had done a review of the Transportation chapter of the Town Plan; Linda gave a printed copy to Rod and will email the file.
 - c. Regarding data required for the Energy chapter, there was agreement that having the # of residential units in the village area and the # of units outside the village would be useful. Rod indicated that he could compile this. Also, agreement that goals should be developed/phrased so that they can be measured readily. (Linda will inquire if the VT DMV can possibly compile odometer info from inspections with the zip codes of car owners.)
 - d. Regarding siting/mapping for renewable energy generation, Rod proposed a rubric that considers the scale of the project and the sensitivity of the site. Working group members outlined the view that project details are well reviewed by the state permitting process, and that the primary role for the Town is regarding aesthetics.
 - i. [REFERENCE: per PUC rules https://puc.vermont.gov/sites/psbnew/files/doc_library/5100-PUC-nm-effective-07-01-2017_0.pdf p 16, 20), the project developer must file information about property boundaries, setbacks, locations of proposed utility or communication lines; areas where vegetation is to be cleared or altered; any proposed direct or indirect alterations to or impacts on wetlands or other natural resources; plans for any drainage of surface and/or sub-

surface water; plans to control erosion and sedimentation; screening, landscaping, groundcover, fencing, exterior lighting, and signs; any proposed access driveway, roadway, or parking area; a wetland delineation.

- ii. This information goes to the Town legislative bodies, the municipal and regional planning commissions, the Department of Public Service; the Agency of Natural Resources; the Natural Resources Board, the Division for Historic Preservation; the Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets; and the electric company; the host landowner; and all adjoining landowners. (https://puc.vermont.gov/sites/psbnew/files/doc_library/5100-PUC-nm-effective-07-01-2017_0.pdf p 16, 20)]
- e. Rod spoke strongly against identifying specific parcels as preferred sites as defined by the PUC rules:
- i. "A specific location designated in a duly adopted municipal plan under 24 V.S.A. chapter 117 for the siting of a renewable energy plant or specific type or size of renewable energy plant, provided that the plant meets the siting criteria recommended in the plan for the location; or a specific location that is identified in a joint letter of support from the municipal legislative body and municipal and regional planning commissions in the community where the net-metering system will be located." (https://puc.vermont.gov/sites/psbnew/files/doc_library/5100-PUC-nm-effective-07-01-2017_0.pdf p 9)
 - ii. Rather, Rod recommended outlining clear guidance in the plan for the Planning Commission and Selectboard to follow. Having different criteria for smaller projects (ie,150 kW) and for larger projects (ie, 500 kW) was discussed.
- f. For the next meeting, Rod will take the TRORC map for prime solar areas in Norwich and overlay the Town ridgeline protection and scenic areas maps.

6. Other Business

7. Future Meeting Schedule & Agenda Items

- a. January 8, 2018 AT 7:00 PM
 - i. Continued discussion of siting/mapping

8. Comments from the Public - None

Adjournment: 9:00 PM

Linda Gray

Future Meetings:

Tuesday, January 8, 2019 – Regular Meeting at 7:00 PM

Enhanced Energy Planning Subcommittee Agendas & Minutes available at:
<http://norwich.vt.us/planning-commission/> and <http://norwich.vt.us/energy-committee/>