

ENHANCED ENERGY PLANNING WORKING GROUP

NORWICH ENERGY COMMITTEE
NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 5, 2019, Tracy Hall

Regular Meeting

Members Present: Lynnwood Andrews (Conservation Commission), Rob Gere (NEC), Linda Gray (NEC Chair), Melissa Horwitz (PC), Aaron Lamperti (NEC)

Others/Guests: Linda Cook (SB, at 7:25), Charlie Lindner (NEC volunteer)

Clerk: Linda Gray

Staff: Rod Francis

Linda Gray, of the Norwich Energy Commission, called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM

1. **Approve Agenda** - Approved by those present
2. **Comments from the Public** - None
3. **Minutes** – 1-8-19 – Approved
4. **Announcements, Reports, Updates & Correspondence**
 - a. Linda Gray brought a few hard copies of the latest draft Energy chapter from the Town of Hartford.
 - b. Rod Francis reported that TRORC staff have shared a report from a statewide utility group on grid constraints; looking ahead, this group will likely propose that the PUC develop rules that will encourage future renewable generation facilities at locations that work well with the existing grid infrastructure. Rod will circulate this report by email to the group.
5. **Continued review of Act 174 Checklist and the current Town Plan Energy Chapter**
 - a. Data request from 12/2/18 meeting: a comparison of the number of residential units in the village zoning district and the number of units outside the village
 - i. Rod reported that Norwich has a total of 1,551 dwelling units. Of these, 342 are in the Village Districts. Twenty-eight percent of all dwelling units are in the Village. Rod indicated is higher than average in Vermont. Rod noted that we add only 4-10 additional dwelling units in Norwich each year, but these are not being added in the Village district.
 - ii. Possible solutions were discussed including adding zoning districts including "Rural," with a minimum parcel size of something like 40 acres (rather than the current minimum of 2 acres for "Rural Residential"); and having a goal of perhaps 80% of future new houses being in the village zones, with perhaps an additional district on the edge of the existing village with higher density than the existing rural residential. For this to work meaningful having wastewater treatment options would need to be present.
 - b. Review of Woodstock language
 - i. Rod has been trying to obtain a copy of the draft siting language from the Town of Woodstock, but hasn't received it yet. He will circulate to the group when he gets it. The Woodstock approach is to list where there can be no development and outside those areas, a project-by-project review. Linda proposed that, after language has been drafted, we apply it to the Fire District parcel that was designated preferred in 2018, and see how the language works with a real-life case.
 - c. Continued Discussion of siting/mapping
 - i. Rod brought maps showing current land cover (developed/open/forest/water), current land use (commercial/public/small- and large-lot residential/farm/undeveloped), community facilities, transportation, elevation, slope, water resources, wetlands, ag. soils, habitat and forest. There was discussion of whether solar installations have any long-term impact on ag. soils and agreement to gather information on this for the next meeting.
 - ii. Regarding the Hartford draft language on siting, there was a question on the intention of their constraint on locations that were forested within the past 3 years; Linda will follow up for clarification. Linda highlighted that performance standards -- such as building codes -- are highly rated as a policy approach; she suggested that a related goal is included in the Norwich draft chapter.

- iii. Rod reiterated that the timeline is to have a chapter drafted by April.
- iv. Linda will circulate the Hartford draft so that everyone can review their strategies/actions.

6. Other Business

7. Future Meeting Schedule & Agenda Items

- a. March 12, 2019 at 7:00 PM
 - i. continued discussion of siting/mapping;
 - ii. review of Woodstock language; and
 - iii. discuss Hartford strategies/actions to include in Norwich draft

8. Comments from the Public - None

Adjournment: 9:00 PM

Linda Gray

APPROVED 3/20/19

Future Meetings:

Tuesday, March 12, 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/>