

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
REGIONAL ENERGY COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 12, 2016
MEETING NOTES

The regular meeting of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's Regional Energy Committee was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2016 at 4:00PM in Conference Room 1 of the Central Vermont Medical Center.

Committee Members Present:

Jamie Stewart – Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation
Brian Fitzgerald – Town of Duxbury
Julie Potter – Town of East Montpelier
Bram Towbin – Town of Plainfield Selectboard
Janet Shatney – Barre City
Don LaHaye – Town of Waitsfield
Alex Bravakis – Novus Energy Development
Barbara Conrey – City of Montpelier Energy Committee
Robert Dostis – Green Mountain Power
Ron Krauth – Town of Middlesex
Paul Zabriskie – Capstone Community Action
Steve Fitzhugh – Town of Northfield Planning Commission
Karen Horn – Vermont League of Cities & Towns
Karen Walton – Green Mountain Transit

Committee Members Not Present:

Jackie Cassino – Agency of Transportation
Billy Coster – Agency of Natural Resources
Patty Richards – Washington Electric Coop

Others Present:

Ken Jones – City of Montpelier Energy Committee
Bonnie Waninger – CVRPC Executive Director
Eric Vorwald – CVRPC Senior Planner
Dan Currier - CVRPC Program Manager
Marian Wolz – CVRPC Assistant Planner

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME:

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Waninger at 4:03PM. The meeting began with an introduction to the Regional Energy Planning Initiative by Ms. Waninger, followed by introductions of those present.

CHANGES OR AMMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

No changes to the agenda were recommended.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No members of the public presented comments.

SELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR & VICE CHAIR:

A motion was made by Ron Krauth and seconded by Jamie Stewart to nominate Steve Fitzhugh to Committee Chair. Mr. Vorwald called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried with 14 in favor and 0 opposed. Mr. Fitzhugh entertained nominations for Vice Chair. A motion was made by Mr. Fitzhugh and seconded by Ms. Potter to nominate Bram Towbin to be Committee Vice Chair. Mr. Fitzhugh called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried with 14 in favor and 0 opposed.

RULES OF PROCEDURE REVIEW:

Mr. Vorwald provided an overview of the draft rules of procedure and asked the Committee to provide comments on the draft. Ms. Shatney asked that the reference to "Act 174 of 2015" in the draft rules of procedure be corrected to "Act 174 of 2016". Mr. Towbin asked that all email addresses for Committee members be included in meeting materials. No other comments were made. Mr. Fitzhugh closed the comment period for the draft rules of procedure.

OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL ENERGY PLANNING & ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES:

Mr. Vorwald began the discussion of the Regional Energy Planning Initiative. Mr. Fitzhugh requested that the PowerPoint presentation be made available. Mr. Vorwald noted that the reason the CVRPC is doing the regional energy planning is to meet the State's energy goals. The main goal to be achieved is to meet 90% of Vermont's total energy from renewable sources by 2050 (90X50 goal). Mr. Vorwald continued by discussing the requirements of the plan which include an examination of current energy use in the Central Vermont region through the sectors of electricity, space heating/thermal and transportation. Mr. Vorwald noted the plan will also include examination of thermal efficiency & alternative heating systems, transportation system changes & land use strategies, conservation and improvements in efficiency as well as energy resource mapping. Ms. Wolz continued the presentation by discussing the LEAP (Long Range Energy Alternative Planning Systems) model. Ms. Wolz discussed how the projections from the LEAP model will set the energy use and generation goals for Central Vermont to reach the State's 90X50 goal. Ms. Wolz noted that the LEAP model

assumes fuel switching to renewable sources and electrification of the grid. Mr. Bravakis noted that this meant continued decentralization and expansion of the electric grid.

Ms. Wolz continued with a presentation of some of the outputs from the LEAP Model, followed by a discussion of the regional renewable electricity generation goals set by the Public Service Department. Mr. Towbin noted that municipal biomass generation should be taken into account and that the plan should focus on a broader picture of renewable energy generation. Mr. Vorwald continued with a brief overview of the mapping component of the planning process. Mr. Krauth noted that in many cases, the discussion of renewable energy siting can be very difficult. Mr. Fitzhugh suggested that public engagement on the energy resource mapping begin as early in the process as possible. Mr. Vorwald concluded the introduction presentation with a general timeline of the energy planning process. Mr. Fitzhugh suggested that the Energy Standards Training to be held on Wednesday, December 14th be taped.

DISCUSSION OF IDENTIFIED CONSTRAINTS FOR MAPPING:

Mr. Currier presented the known and possible mapping constraints that will be used for the energy resource mapping. Ms. Potter suggested that prime agricultural soils be deemed a possible/probable constraint. Mr. Fitzgerald suggested moving public/preserved lands to known constraints. Mr. Bravakis asked about mapping properties in the Vermont Current Use Program and if those properties could be included in possible constraints. Ms. Waninger noted that the program does not preclude energy development, however the landowner could lose the benefit of the Current Use Program if energy development occurred on the property. Ms. Horn noted that the Vermont Department of Taxes has ruled that major energy development on parcels in the Current Use Program would remove those parcels from the program. Mr. Currier suggested adding shoreline buffer, elevations above 2500 ft, slopes above 25% and future land use map development areas to possible regional constraints.

Mr. Currier brought up the idea of considering economic development/lands primed for economic growth as constraint areas. Mr. Dostis noted his support for this idea, of ‘marrying’ economic development with energy/solar development. Mr. Bravakis asked that the “distribution lines” marked on the map be corrected to “transmission lines”.

Mr. Fitzhugh reiterated the idea of engaging Municipal Planning Commissions at the beginning of the energy resource mapping process. Mr. Currier asked that the Committee members brainstorm possible lands or sites that might be suitable for renewable energy development. In response to a question asked by Mr. Zabriskie regarding the purpose of this planning process, Mr. Vorwald noted that this process was both a discussion of regional constraints and picking sites that may be suitable for renewable development.

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:

Mr. Vorwald asked if any Committee Members had conflicts with setting up future meetings at 4PM. No conflicts were voiced. Mr. Vorwald noted the Committee would be

meeting once a month and that he would send out a poll to determine the best date for the January meeting.

ADJOURN:

With no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:06PM.