

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Regional Plan Committee
DRAFT Minutes
July 16, 2018

Present:

☒ Laura Hill-Eubanks, Chair ☒ Julie Potter ☐ Ron Krauth
☒ Dara Torre, Vice Chair ☒ Kirby Keeton

Staff: Bonnie Waninger

Guests: John Brabant, Calais Commissioners

B. Waninger called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm. Quorum was present to conduct business.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Public Comment

None.

Elections

J. Potter nominated L. Hill-Eubanks as Chair; K. Keeton seconded. No additional nominations were made, and Waninger closed nominations. The Committee elected L. Hill-Eubanks as Chair.

J. Potter nominated D. Torre as Vice Chair; K. Keeton seconded. No additional nominations were made, and the Chair closed nominations. The Committee elected D. Torre as Vice Chair.

Preferred Site Designation

Waninger provided a presentation to establish a shared understanding among Committee members. She:

- discussed New England's energy profile and Vermont's approach to 90x50,
- reviewed the electric energy supply pipeline,
- discussed private and public activities for energy siting,
- reviewed underlying assumptions,
- discussed siting considerations and challenges, and
- reviewed the Committee's role.

She asked the Committee to consider five questions:

- Where does the Commission reside on the spectrum of deferring decisions to municipalities and establishing regional preferred locations?
- Does the scale of development (residential, commercial, utility) matter and, if so, how?
- Will CVRPC treat all technologies the same? If not, is the treatment based on impact?
- Will CVRPC consider cumulative impacts and, if so, how?
- To what extent should community and municipal (and developer?) engagement occur during this process versus when a project is proposed?

Where does the Commission reside on the spectrum of deferring decisions to municipalities and establishing regional preferred locations?

The Committee suggested the Commission would defer to municipal preferred siting decisions when:

- the municipality used a robust public engagement process when making preferred siting decisions.
- the municipality had an approved [24 V.S.A. § 4350(b)(1)] and certified (Act 174) plan.
- the affected transmission and distribution utilities (Washington Electric Cooperative/Green Mountain Power/VELCO) had been engaged in the decision process. Ex. Transmission is adequate or energy storage is addressed.
- power users are located on the same site as power generator.

Does the scale of development (residential, commercial, utility) matter and, if so, how?

The Committee agreed that scale mattered. The Committee discussed scale in relation to regional impact. It directed staff to research this issue and provide a de minimis-level recommendation at the next meeting.

Will CVRPC treat all technologies the same? If not, is the treatment based on impact?

The Committee did not address this questions.

Will CVRPC consider cumulative impacts and, if so, how?

The Committee recommended that CVRPC consider cumulative impacts.

To what extent should community and municipal (and developer?) engagement occur during this process versus when a project is proposed?

The Committee recommended engagement occur during energy plan development and for proposed projects.

Meeting Minutes

J. Potter moved to approve the April 20, 2018 meeting minutes as presented; D. Torre seconded. Motion carried.

Meetings

The Committee did not set a regular meeting date. The next Committee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, August 29 at 4pm.

The Committee requested that staff:

- Develop documentation outlining components of a municipal process that might be required by CVRPC for preferred site designation deference.
- Develop documentation regarding when and how CVRPC would weigh in on preferred site designation.

The Committee requested staff contact Rick Weston, Director of Policy at the Regulatory Assistance Project (RAP). RAP is an independent, non-partisan, non-governmental organization dedicated to accelerating the transition to a clean, reliable, and efficient energy future. The Committee would appreciate a discussion with Weston on community planning opportunities and issues for energy and siting.

Adjourn

J. Potter moved to adjourn at 6:00 pm; K. Keeton seconded. Motion carried.