Janet Shatney, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.

Adjustments to the Agenda
None.

Public Comments
None.

Act 250 / Section 248 Applications & Projects of Substantial Regional Impact

a) Presentation & Preferred Site Request by Aegis/ Emancipation Energy, 150 KW Solar Installation located at 58 Center Road, Middlesex

Niles Behn, Aegis, introduced himself and colleague Eric Phaneuf. Aegis is representing property owner, Kingsbury and Emancipation Energy. They are planning to submit the CPR at the end of June. Behn presented the project as outlined in the attached presentation. Aegis is seeking a Preferred Site Letter from CVRPC and have letters from Middlesex SB and PC. There currently there is no solar in Middlesex. The town is currently working on their energy plan and recognizes the need to work toward the state’s renewable energy goals.

There will not need to be any clearing or excavation to build the road at the site. The area is also mostly cleared. Existing trees provide screening and the project cannot be viewed from any other residential property. The commercial operation owned by Kingsbury will be the energy off taker. The commercial use is a new medical marijuana facility which has an interior greenhouse and will be utilizing the amount of the power generated at the site.

A committee member raised the question about whether the utility company, Washington Electric Company is aware of the project and concerns about the potential increases to current rate payers. Bill
Powel, Washington Electric responded and stated that they are aware and are obligated to incorporate this project into their portfolio.

The committee had questions about deer wintering yard, as noted on the site plan. ANR has provided some guidance on the deer wintering yard and has provided comments on fencing and setbacks to wetlands. Aegis will be adjusting fencing design based upon ANR comments, ANR prefers 8 ft fence so deer cannot jump into the solar areas and get trapped, smaller rodents will be able to travel through the fence.

The committee also inquired about the references to Rule 5.100 and 5.103 which are referenced in the Middlesex letters – these are the net meeting rules and the preferred site rule. Middlesex PC is supporting the designation of the site as preferred and are clarifying that is the one aspect they are providing a determination on at this point.

Committee discussed the staff review which was included in the packet. The committee found no conflict with the Rural Land Use area (Committee member B Wernecke arrived late and isn’t going to weigh in on this aspect.) Based upon the information provided about the deer wintering yards, the committee would defer to Fish and Wildlife for managing possible impacts to deer wintering yards.

The committee is questioned whether it’s reasonable to run the power lines underground as this is a policy in the regional plan. Aegis indicated they are planning to install one pole and then the lines would be underground.

Motion by P Carbee to determine the Middlesex site as a preferred site and to provide a letter to Aegis, seconded by J D’Amico. L Cattaneo abstained from the vote, as he has raised the issue once again that the CVRPC needs to address renewable energy storage in its energy plan and is concerned about the increases to rate payers who have invested in installing solar at their residential properties. J D’Amico agrees with Cattaneo’s comment and thinks someone needs to address the overcapacity implications. Behn added a general comment highlighting the other social and economic benefits of solar development. Motion passed with the following votes: P Carbee – aye, B Wernecke – aye, J D’Amico – aye, J Shatney – aye, L Cattaneo – abstaining.

Committee discussion followed about the need to have better guidance in the regional plan and the need to address the idea of storage on site, instead of flooding the daytime market with renewables. L Cattaneo stated that Washington Electric Company was approved for a rate increase, which doubled the service charge for residential rate payers, this has doubled and this could go up even more and the homeowner is penalized for this. L Cattaneo has a 3.8kw array and J D’Amico has a 3.9kw array and also has a Tesla back up battery. They would like staff to take this message to the Executive Director.

b) Review Project Review Summery Sheet
No questions or comments on the information contained on the Sheet, except a committee member added Spruce Place LLC recently submitted the revised plan for the sidewalk plan and it should be accepted by the District Commission soon. The committee also briefly discussed the hospital expansion project. Traffic impacts at the adjacent intersection have been identified and talked about over 20 years ago and it appears it’s still the same situation. The current hospital expansion plans are on hold as the cost estimate was too high. The committee also discussed the possible traffic impacts from the housing development at the mall site and recognition that traffic from this project would exist the mall at the other end of the property and wouldn’t contribute to the concerns at the hospital intersection.
Approve meeting minutes
Motion by L Cattaneo to approve the January 23, 2020 minutes, seconded by B Wernecke, with two spelling errors corrected. Motion passed with the following votes: P Carbee – aye, B Wernecke – aye, J D’Amico – abstaining, J Shatney – aye, L Cattaneo – aye.

Adjournment
Motion by L Cattaneo to adjourn the Project Review Committee at 5:00 pm, seconded by B Wernecke, all in favor. Motion carried.
Emancipation Energy Request for RPC Letter of Support, Middlesex 150kW Solar Project
Emancipation Energy, Middlesex, VT Solar Project

As Emancipation Energy’s (“Emancipation”) representative Aegis Renewable Energy, Inc. (“Aegis”), requests a letter of support for "Preferred Site Status“, per section 5.103 of rule 5.100, from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission for a proposed 150-kilowatt solar array to be constructed and operated on lands owned by Stephen Van Esen and leased to Emancipation. The property is located at 58 Center Road in Middlesex Vermont.

Slides:
- Project Overview
- Site Location Map
- Site Layout
- Zoning Map
- Planning Commission Letter of Support
- Select Board Letter of Support
- Contact Info
Project Overview

- 150kW AC / 222.4kW DC Array
- To be interconnected to existing WEC, 3 phase distribution line onsite
- Wetland delineation and RTE work beginning on 5/22/2020
- 5 year old existing delineation shows no wetland or buffer in the array area
- Project area zoned Mixed Use
- Strong municipal support
- Zero visual impact concerns to any properties
- Site was previously cleared for other development
- Planning Commission confirmed that the municipal energy plan supports and encourages projects like this one and that this project is in compliance with the energy plan
Planning Commission Letter of Support

Town of Middlesex
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602

April 16, 2020

Ms. Judith Whitney, Clerk
Public Service Board of Vermont
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2701

Re: Preferred Siting Designation under Rule 5.100

Dear Ms. Whitney,

We refer to the application for a Certificate of Public Good (the "Application") filed by Emancipation Energy LLC, in respect of the 150 kW-AC solar electricity generation project (the "Project") proposed to be sited on the property owned by Stephen Van Esen at 58 Center Road in Middlesex, Vermont (the "Location"). The Location falls within our jurisdiction and we have reviewed the proposed project in detail, including visual renderings, project layouts and designs. Having made our review, we wish to support the Project and declare our desire to have the Location designated as a "Preferred Site" under Section 5.103 of your Rule 5.100.

We note that we take no position on the Project's compliance with any requirement of Rule 5.100 or of other applicable provisions of Vermont law. This letter is solely for the purpose of providing support for the Project under Section 5.103.

Sincerely,

Town of Middlesex
Planning Commission

By:

Sandra Levine
Chair
Selectboard Letter of Support

TOWN OF MIDDLESEX

April 30, 2020

Judith Whitney, Clerk
Public Service Board of Vermont
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602-2701

Dear Ms. Whitney:

The Middlesex Select Board has reviewed a proposal by Aegis Renewable Energy, Inc. to site a 150KW-AC solar electricity generation project at 58 Center Road in Middlesex, Vermont. Aegis asked the Board to determine that this site, which is in the Town of Middlesex and, therefore, in the Board’s jurisdiction, is a “Preferred Site.” You may be more familiar with the application for a Certificate of Public Good as filed by Emancipation Energy LLC.

The Board discussed this request at our April 7th and April 21st meetings, weighing input from Aegis, an abutting residential neighbor, and the Chair of the Middlesex Planning Commission. While the Board reserves the right to address any potential concerns in the future regarding this project, it found no reason to object to 58 Center Road as a Preferred Site due to its relatively hidden location near the interstate and commercial properties. By a vote of 4-1, on April 21, 2020, the Select Board approved Aegis’s request to designate 58 Center Road as a Preferred Site for this 150 KW-AC solar electricity generation project.

The Board notes that it takes no position on whether this project complies with Rule 5.100 or other applicable provisions of Vermont law. This letter is solely for the purpose of providing support for this project under Section 5.103.

On behalf of the Middlesex Select Board,

[Signature]

Peter O. Hood, Chair
CONTACT INFO

Nils Behn

340 Mad River Park, Suite 6 Waitsfield, VT 05673.

802-560-0055

nbehn@aegis-re.com