

**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Municipal Plan Review Committee**  
**Minutes**

August 27, 2020 at 6:30pm  
Via GoToMeeting Software

**Committee Members:**

X	Bill Arrand, Worcester
	Lee Cattaneo, Orange Commissioner
X	Ron Krauth, Middlesex Commissioner
X	Joyce Manchester, Moretown Alternate Commissioner
X	Jan Ohlsson, Calais Alternate Commissioner

Municipal Representative: Chris Violette, Barre Town Planning and Zoning Administrator  
Public: George Clain, Barre Town Planning Commission; Mike Gilbar, Barre Town Planning Commission;  
Cedric Sanborn, Barre Town Planning Commission Chair; Byron Atwood, Barre Town Planning  
Commission  
Staff: Zach Maia, Clare Rock

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair B. Arrand at 6:47 pm. Introductions were made.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

B. Arrand asks for nomination for chair, J. Manchester nominates B. Arrand for chair, J. Ohlsson seconds. Motion carries.

J. Ohlsson nominates J. Manchester for vice-chair, B. Arrand seconds. Motion carries.

**COMMITTEE PROCESS**

Z. Maia provided an overview of the revised Rules of Procedure, dated February 2020. The changes primarily relate to changing the name of the Town Plan Review Committee to the Municipal Plan Review Committee and making the membership details align with the Board of Commissioner's Revised Bylaws, adopted December 2019.

J. Ohlsson moved to approve the revised Rules of procedure, dated February 2020, seconded by J. Manchester. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC HEARING: APPROVAL OF THE BARRE TOWN PLAN AND CONFIRMATION OF THE LOCAL**

## **PLANNING PROCESS**

*B. Arrand moved to open the hearing; seconded by J. Ohlsson. Motion carried.*

Z. Maia introduced the Barre Town Plan and explained the plan is a straightforward update of the previous plan and builds upon the Town's previous planning effort. New inclusions in this update are updated language regarding forest integrity, and flood resilience elements. Z. Maia notes that the plan includes employment data and good background information on the town's economic activity.

Z. Maia continued to note that the plan includes mention of pursuing Village Center Designation, which will provide the Town with historical redevelopment opportunities when pursued and designated in the future. The Plan also includes an Enhanced Energy Plan appendix.

C. Violette provides overview of planning process of developing the Enhanced Energy Plan in 2017. Town was seeing influx of Renewable Energy projects, but then had to work on town plan as an addendum. Updated for statutory requirements, created new maps, and overall kept it as a solid plan.

B. Atwood was reading discussions about what to include in future updates and is finding that plans are wide-reaching and that this seems to be a new development. Asks MPRC and B. Arrand if planning is becoming more elaborate, cumbersome. B. Arrand says they were almost always green-lighted. B. Atwood recalled a plan being approved without land use plan. B. Arrand questions if review is getting too strict. B. Atwood raises question again.

J. Ohlsson clarified her interpretation of suggestions and discussed housing especially as something to think about post-COVID. C. Violette adds that they are suggestions, and as long as they remain as suggestions, it is OK. Z. Maia clarifies that they are just suggestions.

J. Ohlsson questions about if this discussion is in line with the planning process. B. Arrand reminds that there are two separate items under this public hearing.

J. Ohlsson had one comment in plan with elderly populations and housing. Would like to see more discussion and thought towards multi-generational housing opportunities

G. Clain asks if the public hearing has been opened. J. Ohlsson clarifies that there is no public here. It is clarified that the public hearing is open.

*J. Manchester moved to close the public hearing, J. Ohlsson seconds. Motion Carries.*

## **PUBLIC HEARING: ISSUANCE OF A DETERMINATION OF ENERGY COMPLIANCE**

*B. Arrand moved to open the hearing; seconded by J. Ohlsson. Motion carried.*

C. Violette provides overview of Energy planning process. CVRPC drafted enhanced energy plan and turned it over to the Town. Barre Town spent time tweaking plan and included personal input, and then put it on hold while working on Town Plan. Feels that because CVRPC put plan together for town, it should be recommended that it meet all requirements.

C. Violette clarifies that it is missing the requirement [of Existing Generation Map]. The map is not policy

making, not regulatory, just states information. Omission is a partnership between Town of Barre and CVRPC. Hopes it does not hold up approval as Town would have to go through 3-month amendment process for PC hearing and 2 legislative hearings.

Z. Maia provides overview of why the map must be included and presents the need for MPRC to decide if the reason is compelling. C. Violette states that a compelling reason is that the map is not accurate, and once more solar is built, it is out of date and does not stand up to an online dashboard. The map could mislead the public over time.

J. Manchester says the map would represent situation at a point in time. In 5-8 years, it would be useful to see how much generation exists in the town at a certain time. J. Ohlsson adds that ANR claims all maps are inaccurate. Says that once we set the standard, it is the standard for everyone else. C. Violette says he disagrees, but why not have the map in the plan by approving it.

J. Manchester asks staff if the MPRC can issue a conditional approval pending inclusion of the map by Sept. 8. B. Arrand recollects that they've done this before. C. Rock says that staff have identified an option for the public hearing to continue, especially since PSD does not recognize conditional plans.

J. Ohlsson asks if the map is provided by September 8, will the Town have to hold more hearings? C. Rock states that determination is on a locally adopted plan meeting all standards. J. Ohlsson says that if the hearing is kept open, and we get the map prior to September 8, then decision can be made?

C. Violette states that he is hopeful that Town and CVRPC could update the map in partnership as part of the plan by September 8. C. Rock states that the plan is already adopted. B. Atwood says no one attended any hearing. C. Rock clarifies that plan has already been adopted.

M. Gilbar says that bringing the Plan back through the Selectboard would make this a beauracatic beaucratic, crazy process that will further un-endeare them.

J. Ohlsson asks where information in Table 11 came from – the citation says PSD. C. Violette says that it was part of CVRPC information. Z. Maia clarifies that it is RPC provided information.

B. Arrand asks C. Rock is the Town can meet requirements by September 8. C. Rock states that the map needs to be part of an adopted municipal plan.

Z. Maia and B. Arrand discuss the timeline. C. Violette says that avenue makes sense, but there is not time to get the plan readopted by Sept. 8. Goes back to issue of it not being necessary in this case. J. Ohlsson asks if anyone attended to comment on energy plan. C. Violette clarifies none. J. Ohlsson says that if map was or was not in it; it doesn't matter since no one commented. Wonders if it is worth it to put the Town back through it.

B. Arrand clarifies that they are voting to send it along, or not, or to move the hearing to Sept 8. J. Manchester says that in this case, the Selectboard is acting as the public hearing. In this case, can the Selectboard make a motion to include this map, and would this carry? J. Manchester says this would wait until Sept 8. C. Rock says that there is some hesitancy around that procedure. The cleanest way to do this would be to revisit the idea of relevancy of applicability of map, rather than on process. Staff perspective is to clarify where the decision is – whether or not the map is included.

C. Violette wonders if we could do both. Will still take it to the selectboard and have the map in there for September 8. J. Manchester says that MPRC is setting the precedent that this map is not needed for any municipality. B. Arrand asks for suggestions or proposals on a vote.

J. Manchester asks if Board can reject the vote. C. Rock states that board can take or not take the recommendation. B. Arrand says that it will be put off until September 8 and may not be able to recommend to the Board.

J. Ohlsson asks what the rush is to get this plan in, to which C. Violette states that the plan won't have substantial deference and Barre is a hotspot for solar, due to slopes and proximity to 3-phase power. Nothing is on the radar currently. J. Manchester asks if on September 8 they can approve the plan, noting that the map was not included, but it wouldn't have changed the compliance plan. Then RPC can decide if this is a big deal to them.

G. Clain says that as PC member, it throws Barre under the bus if an attorney wants to get involved. The better course is to state that this map is not required in Barre Town's case.

B. Atwood asks if the board can go against staff recommendation. Board would appreciate that this is a mix-up between staff and town, and the declination of this plan would put CVRPC in a different light where the RPC is not lenient or assisting the Town. Doesn't look good that we have this mix-up going on. It is important for CVRPC and relations with municipalities to be lenient.

C. Violette suggests to MPRC that there is always more information that is more applicable. More up-to-date data is elsewhere. G. Clain agrees and says that the best outcome would be to say that this is not applicable and helps relations with towns.

J. Manchester stands by that this is a snapshot of this Town in 2020, and this would set a precedent for other towns, and it worries her. J. Ohlsson agrees and says that one way around this would be to include the map and state that this map would be outdated.

B. Arrand says that they are just recommending something to the commission. Wants to recommend that the Board approves it.

J. Ohlsson and C. Rock clarify that the hearing can be continued to a specific date and time. B. Arrand asks for a motion. J. Manchester asks what action the board will take? C. rock advises the committee to close one hearing.

G. Clain asks about appendix plan nature. C. Rock clarifies that the review is of the adopted municipal plan, and an appendix must be adopted through the same process as the municipal plan.

Vote to continue public hearing on energy section under September 8 at 4:30pm. Motion by Ron, second by JO. Discussion ensued regarding the timing of the hearing.

*R. Krauth moves to continue hearing to September 8 at 5:00pm via GoToMeeting, second by J. Manchester. Motion carries.*

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CVRPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:**

##### **a. CONFIRMATION OF THE TOWN OF BARRE MUNICIPAL PLANNING PROCESS**

**b. APPROVAL OF THE TOWN OF BARRE TOWN PLAN**

**c. ISSUANCE OF A DETERMINATION OF ENERGY COMPLIANCE**

*J. Manchester moved to recommend to the CVRPC Board confirmation of the local planning process; seconded by R. Krauth. Motion carried.*

*J. Manchester moved to recommend to the CVRPC Board approval of the Barre Town Plan; seconded by J Ohlsson. Motion carried.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*J. Manchester moved to approve the August 27, 2019 minutes; seconded by B. Arrand. R. Krauth and J. Ohlsson abstain. Motion carried.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

*R. Krauth moved to adjourn at 8:11pm; seconded by J. Manchester. Motion carried.*