

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Project Review Committee

May 28, 2020 4:00 – 5:15 pm

Remote Participation via GoToMeetings

Minutes

Project Review Committee Members

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lee Cattaneo, Orange Commissioner	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	John Brabant, Calais Commissioner	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jerry D'Amico, Roxbury Commissioner (Alternate Seat)	3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Peter Carbee, Washington Commissioner	4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Janet Shatney, Barre City Commissioner	5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bob Wernecke, Berlin Commissioner	6

7 Staff: Clare Rock, Zach Maia

8 Guests: Niles Behn and Eric Phaneuf, Aegis; Bill Powel, Washington Electric Company

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

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12 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

13 None.

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15 **Public Comments**

16 None.

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

19

20 **a) Presentation & Preferred Site Request by Aegis/ Emancipation Energy, 150 KW Solar Installation** 21 **located at 58 Center Road, Middlesex**

22

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

29

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

35

36 A committee member raised the question about whether the utility company, Washington Electric
37 Company is aware of the project and concerns about the potential increases to current rate payers. Bill

1 Powel, Washington Electric responded and stated that they are aware and are obligated to incorporate
2 this project in to their portfolio.

3
4 The committee had question about deer wintering yard, as noted on the site plan. ANR has provided
5 some guidance on the deer wintering yard and has provided comments on fencing and setbacks to
6 wetlands. Aegis will be adjusting fencing design based upon ANR comments, ANR prefers 8 ft fence so
7 deer cannot jump into the solar areas and get trapped, smaller rodents will be able to travel through the
8 fence.

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

14
15 Committee discussed the staff review which was included in the packet. The committee found no
16 conflict with the Rural Land Use area (Committee member B Wernecke arrived late and isn't going to
17 weigh in on this aspect.) Based upon the information provided about the deer wintering yards, the
18 committee would defer to Fish and Wildlife for managing possible impacts to deer wintering yards.

19
20 The committee is questioned whether it's reasonable to run the power lines underground as this is a
21 policy in the regional plan. Aegis indicated they are planning to install one pole and then the lines would
22 be underground.

23
24 Motion by P Carbee to determine the Middlesex site as a preferred site and to provide a letter to Aegis,
25 seconded by J D'Amico. L Cattaneo abstained from the vote, as he has raised the issue once again that
26 the CVRPC needs to address renewable energy storage in its energy plan and is concerned about the
27 increases to rate payers who have invested in installing solar at their residential properties. J D'Amico
28 agrees with Cattaneo's comment and thinks someone needs to address the overcapacity implications.
29 Behn added a general comment highlighting the other social and economic benefits of solar
30 development. Motion passed with the following votes: P Carbee – aye, B Wernecke – aye, J D'Amico –
31 aye, J Shatney – aye, L Cattaneo – abstaining.

32
33 Committee discussion followed about the need to have better guidance in the regional plan and the
34 need to address the idea of storage on site, instead of flooding the daytime market with renewables.
35 L Cattaneo stated that Washington Electric Company was approved for a rate increase, which doubled
36 the service charge for residential rate payers, this has doubled and this could go up even more and the
37 homeowner is penalized for this. L Cattaneo has a 3.8kw array and J D'Amico has a 3.9kw array and also
38 has a Tesla back up battery. They would like staff to take this message to the Executive Director.

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40 **b) Review Project Review Summary Sheet**

41 No questions or comments on the information contained on the Sheet, except a committee member
42 added Spruce Place LLC recently submitted the revised plan for the sidewalk plan and it should be
43 accepted by the District Commission soon. The committee also briefly discussed the hospital expansion
44 project. Traffic impacts at the adjacent intersection have been identified and talked about over 20 years
45 ago and it appears it's still the same situation. The current hospital expansion plans are on hold as the
46 cost estimate was too high. The committee also discussed the possible traffic impacts from the housing
47 development at the mall site and recognition that traffic from this project would exist the mall at the
48 other end of the property and wouldn't contribute to the concerns at the hospital intersection.

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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.