

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Regional Plan Committee

Draft Minutes

June 2, 2021

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Via Zoom, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
29 Main Street, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602

Committee Members:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dara Torre, Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Julie Potter, Vice Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Laura Hill-Eubanks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ron Krauth
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marcella Dent

1 Staff: Clare Rock, Grace Vinson

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3 **Welcome and Adjustments to the Agenda**

4 D Torre opened the meeting at 4:02pm.

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6 **Public Comments**

7 No public comments as no members of the public were present.

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9 **VELCO Draft 2021 Long Range Transmission Plan Comment Review**

10 Grace Vinson provided an overview of VELCO Long Range Transmission Plan (LRTP) including the
11 purpose of the plan, the high level takeaways and recommendations as included in the meeting
12 materials. Committee discussion followed and included questions about VELCO role in implementing the
13 recommendations. The committee indicated the need to be bold about our energy future such is
14 outlined in the state comprehensive energy plan, and that the transmission entity could also consider
15 bolder recommendations in which the grid could accommodate the state's ambitious renewable energy
16 targets. It would be helpful for VELCO to outline what types of grid improvements would be needed if
17 we were to meet our State energy goals.

18

19 Members discussed the possibility that maybe transmission investment needs to happen at a broader
20 scale, not only within Vermont but across New England to accommodate more renewables. The
21 committee agreed that the level of integrated planning has to happen and transmission has to be
22 increased at the regional, state and multi state level. Furthermore equity in the decision making process
23 was also identified as a needed component to ensure some areas or region's wouldn't be losing out the
24 option to contribute to the generation of renewable energy and vice versa. Disparity between Vermont
25 electric utilities was also recognized as Washington Electric gets all its power from renewables so they
26 are not incentivizing new renewable generation compared to GMP which provides more options and
27 incentives to homeowners.

28

29 The committee reviewed the Plan's recommendations and provided the following comments:

30 Regarding flexible load management – the comment generally recognized this as a transmission strategy
31 and wanted to emphasize this is directly tied to the need for broadband investment and smart grid
32 integration as flexible load management relies on broadband infrastructure, data accuracy and data
33 transparency. The committee discussed how this is also a component of rate setting and energy pricing

1 (making energy more expensive during high peak times and less expense during low times to influence
2 consumer behavior. The committee thought it would be helpful if the plan went into more detail about
3 who is responsible for implementing the technology, for example clarify that the technology should be
4 at the utility and developer end (not necessary as much the responsibility with the homeowner.) The
5 committee also recognized that the regional plan update should incorporate this strategy.

6 Regarding curtailment – the committee recognized this is the least favorable option for grid
7 management.

8 Regarding storage – the committee recognized this to be the most favorable recommendation and
9 discussed how diverse storage technology is or could be. The committee noted it would be beneficial to
10 better understand the level of grid upgrades need to effectively implement this recommendation and
11 would like more information to help understand the technological advancements. The committee also
12 recognized the environmental impacts of getting the raw materials to make battery storage (like from
13 the Congo, and extensive mining) and that we have an obligation to better understand the
14 environmental impacts of producing this technology. VELCO did have a very brief mention of
15 environmental impacts and the committee thought this should be a component of a cost/benefit
16 analysis to better understand the environmental tradeoffs. The committee would like more information
17 about the feasibility of implementing this recommendation and this type of technology and the various
18 forms of storage (including costs and enviro impacts of manufacturing and using.)

19
20 Other comments on the plan:

- 21 • Coordination recommendation – it would be nice to understand the roles of the various entities,
22 such as role of the DPS and would be great to have a flow chart to better understand the
23 regulatory and planning framework of who is responsible for the various decisions.
- 24 • Very technical document – the plan should be more accessible to the lay person and
25 recommends more graphics added like those presented at the public meeting.

26
27 The committee also discussed how the Plan would or could inform the update to the Regional Plan:

- 28 • Suggestion that we should still be aiming at the Regional Targets and not lower the targets
29 based upon the VELCO plan.
- 30 • Recognition of the need to have generation, close to users and micro grids (did the VELCO plan
31 include anything about micro grids?)
- 32 • Good to call out and emphasize energy efficiency, and its importance as a part of load
33 management and emphasizes it as a distributed energy resource along with the need for
34 weatherization.

35
36 L Hill-Eubanks made a motion to direct staff to draft a letter with comments in accordance with the
37 discussion pending review by individual committee members for approval by the Board, seconded by M.
38 Dent. All in favor. Motion carried.

39 40 **Approval Minutes**

41 L Hill-Eubanks made a motion to approve the February 11, 2021 minutes, seconded by R Krauth. All in
42 favor. Motion carried.

43 44 **Adjournment at 5:15 pm**

45 R Krauth made a motion to adjourn, seconded by L Hill-Eubanks. All in favor. Motion carried.

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47 **Next meeting Date: TBD**