Windham Planning Commission

5/9/18

These will need significant revisions.

Present:

Planning Commission -Chris Cummings, Jeff Wheeler, Kate Wright

Energy Committee - Michael Simonds, Cathy Stover

On both committees: Bill Dunkel, Tom Johnson, Vance Bell

Ralph …. From Green Lantern

Review of plan for solar array behind the town office

Permit - intent to file permit?? needs to be submitted by the end of this week to meet the deadline of being submitted 45 days before July 1.

Esthetics and visual impact survey on track to be done this week.

Still in early stages of array design.

Ralph will be here with Dorie Barton (?) next week to walk property to get species inventory, now that snow is gone. This info will be inputted into a design map. Civil engineers will survey what the footprint of the array will be. Will the access road be possible between town office and cemetery? Design, environmental impact, engineering all will be addressed.

Cathy - can the deadline be met?

Ralph - Dorie will be getting all done

Ralph - Preferred sites requirements and net metering discussed. Town can designate a site a preferred site - says the project has ‘a shot at bat.’ If the site is not accepted as preferred the incentives will be ‘dead in the water.’

Bill - Letter goes to Alyssa and CCU

Ralph - to project review committee. If the town approved the site it is unlikely that the WRC will not approve the site.

Letter needs to be signed by chair of select board and head of planning commission.

Sketch of plan reviewed. In previous iteration there was tree cutting necessary. If the road going goes between the town office and cemetery the tree cutting would be minimized.

Setbacks were reviewed. Site is .85 acres.

Chris - can line be buried from array to road?

Ralph - probably.

Site may end up more north and east than currently proposed.

Ralph - hopes trees would not need to be cut.

Bill - if cemetery wants more space in 100 - 150 years for burials, arrays would not still exist.

Ralph - 150 kw array proposed - produces 260 - 270 kw hours

Bill - can private individuals buy panels?

Ralph - can’t answer that at this time. Two business models: People can buy into the array - Community Solar. Or Investor Financed Offtake Net Metered Solar - customers can buy the net metering credits. The projects can be a hybrid of both models.

Ownership sold by watt - typical household would buy 10 - 25 k up front that them provides power through 30 years. It would be typically paid off in 11 years.

Jeff had to leave but is okay with this as a preferred site.

Time frame: If permit app goes in by July 1 there will likely be a 3-month waiting period before construction can begin. Construction will likely take about 6 weeks.

Bill - when would lease agreement be made?

Ralph - sometimes better before permit app goes in. In this case propose lease agreement with town after July 1st.

Bill - when should townspeople know they have an option to buy in?

Ralph - we should put together a clearer invitation, including surrounding towns. Green Lantern could put that proposal together.

Cathy - what would groups be entitled to in terms of credits/tax incentives? Group members would be able to move within the Green Mountain Power area and take credits.

Ralph - Individuals’ panels could be sold back if owners move out of GMP area.

Michael - Could he join in the survey next week?

Ralph - Yes - he’ll give town a head up about when they will be surveying.

Vote to accept site as preferred: Motion by Chris to have planning commission accept site as preferred, seconded by Vance. All approved. Motion passed.

Copy of enhanced energy plan reviewed with Marion Major’s comments. Review of Windham’s preferred locations for renewable energy revised based on what locations Windham has.

Tom - add second paragraph under preferred locations that includes qualifications for preferred sites.

Bill will contact Marion Major to determine which Windham energy usage pie graph is correct on page 7.

Goal 4 - Policy 4.1, 4.2 - fine

Policy 4.3 - redundant? Include qualification in both sections

Policy 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11 okay

Policies 4.12 - 14 Not actually policies, but rather statements that should be moved to earlier sections.

4.12 to mapping solar resource section

4.13 and 4.14 to generation section

Renumber back from 4.15.

4.3 Expand with more bullets to include preferred sites suggested by Grafton.

Agriculture policies will be added to 4.6.

Energy Planning Standards document - Enhanced energy plan must be compatible with town plan (probably is but will double check).

Suggestion to add Energy Planning Standards into town plan.

Number 8B re land use and densities - check ‘no.’

Remainder of comments from Marion accepted.

Next step - Bill will prepare a standards checklist for next meeting prior to passing zoning regs to select board for approval.

Next meeting scheduled for May 30 at 6;30 to finalize everything prior to sending to select board.

Chris presents a letter from Hal Wilkins asking about putting in a fence to protect from noise and light from road. Cited a 53-foot setback from road in Section 201.1. Should section 400H be revised to not include walls as a structure? Or could a variance cover this? As long as the Zoning Administrator approves it, that’s fine.

Meeting minutes from April - motion to approve with revision of … by Chris seconded by Vance all approved.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Chris seconded by Tom, all approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:25.