Energy Committee Minutes

1/17/19

Members Present: Vance Bell, Dawn Bower, Bill Dunkel, Tom Johnson, Michael Simonds, Cathy Stover

Meeting called to order at 4:35PM

Michael made a motion (seconded by Vance) to amend the agenda to act on the minutes from our previous meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The committee then examined the minutes from our meeting on 10/15/18 and voted unanimously to adopt them. (Moved byVance, seconded by Michael).

Bill updated the committee on the Button Up Vermont Hero program. We examined a list of Windham residents who have requested a free home energy evaluation from Jake Robichaud, our assigned contractor. The committee added some names to the list and some additional contact information. We went over the follow up steps that are recommended by Efficiency Vermont. Bill will contact Efficiency VT to see if they have more recent data about when the home walk- throughs will occur.

Bill, Vance and Tom updated Dawn, Michael and Cathy on changes in the Enhanced Energy Plan that have been recommended by the Planning Commission after seeking advice from attorneys Gerald Tarrant and Nicholas Low. Those changes include the following:

* An introductory paragraph which clarifies when the Enhanced Energy Plan takes precedent over the Town Plan, and vice versa.
* A reworked list of the criteria for Municipally Designated Preferred Sites for appropriately sized solar and wind projects.
* An additional paragraph under the heading “Areas Unsuitable for Renewable Energy Siting” (p.9), which stresses the fragility of lands above 2000 feet and the importance of avoiding development that could cause flooding and/or harm to headwaters.
* A revision of Policy 3.1, Action Step 4 (page 20) and Policy 4.12 (p.22) which prohibits development above 2000 feet in elevation with these three exceptions:

1) Existing homes above 2000 feet may install solar arrays or wind energy systems for onsite electricity consumption if they abide by all relevant zoning regulations.

2) Existing homes above 2000 feet may install net-metered solar arrays or wind energy systems not to exceed 15 kW capacity.

3) Solar arrays not to exceed 150 kW capacity may be installed above 2,000 feet on former ski slopes which are already cleared.

* The elimination of bullet 3 of Policy 4.6 (p.21) to make it possible for farmers to use their land for alternative energy systems if it no longer is used for agricultural purposes.
* A Revision of the second bullet point under Policy 4.7  (p.22) to read as follows: “Fragile natural areas including ridgelines over 2,000 ft. elevation, subject to the exceptions set out under Policies 3.1 and 4.12”

The committee reviewed the following suggestions which were made at the public hearing on the Enhanced Energy Plan in August, 2018. We will follow up on these suggestions after the next public hearing on the above changes to the Enhanced Energy Plan.

1.) Promote carpooling; explore carpool software. (Policy 2.2, Action Step 3.)

2.) Explore creating a Timber Ridge propane purchasing coop to decrease truck

 traffic and multiple deliveries. (Is this covered under Policy 1.1?)

3.) Explore creating a weatherization coop among residents who would contract

 with one vendor for cheaper prices. (Also, policy 1.1?)

4.) Explore the creation of incentives which encourage new home builders or

 retrofitters to build more efficiently. (Policy 1.2?)

5.) Publicize Efficiency Vermont’s incentive programs and promotion of energy

 saving technologies. (Policy 1.1)

6.) Host a public meeting at which people in town who are doing innovative things

 to generate or save energy can report about this. (Policy 1.1)

The next meeting of the Energy Committee is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 21, 2019 at 4:30 PM in the Town Office.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Dunkel