

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION
6:30 PM, Monday, August 22nd, 2022
MARTIN MEMORIAL HALL, ASCUTNEY VERMONT
FINAL MINUTES

Members in attendance:

Howard Beach – Vice Chair
Paul Tillman –Chair (online via Zoom)
Joseph Bublat - Clerk

Members not in attendance:

Mike Todd – Member
Tyler Harwell - Member

Other Attendees:

Malia Cordero – Reginal Planning (online via Zoom)
Jason Rasmussen - Reginal Planning
Moreen Bogosian (online via Zoom)
Brian Bosenberg
Beth Gorton
Ken Blum
Beth Hunton
Julie Levy
Mrs. Henderson

Attachments: Attachment “A” – Agenda for meeting.

Attachment “B” – Energy Chapter from the Packet

1. Call to order – Meeting was called to order by **Paul Tillman** at 6:35 P. M. **Paul Tillman** handed the meeting over to Vice Chair **Howard Beach**. Both the Chair and Recording secretary are on vacation and gave ample notice for their absence. Paul Tillman attended the meeting so that there could be a quorum and the meeting did not have to be cancelled.
2. Agenda Review – Item umber 6 “Brian Bosenberg – Discussion on scenic resources” will be moved to next month’s meeting agenda.
3. Comments from the Chair and Land Use Administrator – No Comments.
4. Comment from Citizens regarding items not on the agenda. –
 - a. Beth Gorton asked about the land values of land when a 10-acre lot is changed to 3-acre lots. From C10 to RR3-5. There was no direct answer at this time and the Chair will reach out to the Listers.
 - b. A question was asked about the overlay of what is buildable in the Town of Weathersfield and if there will be an overlay on the Town map showing this. The Town is working on getting all the overlays that would show development restrictions in the Town.
5. Approval of Meeting Minutes – August 8, 2022

Paul Tillman made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 8th with corrections as needed.

Seconded by Joseph Bublat.

Changes – Mr. Todd was listed as attending twice.

Motion Passed - All in favor

6. Brian Bosenberg – Discussion on scenic resources – Moved to a meeting next Month.
7. Town Plan – Energy section – Jason Rasmussen talked about some history of the town’s energy plan and the direction the Planning Commission wanted to go with this chapter. Jason went over what the planning commission had asked from him and Regional Planning. The Planning Commission had liked the way Bennington’s Energy plan looked and was written so Regional Planning has been focusing on mirroring this plan. Jason R and Maria then asked if there were any question or changes wanted.

Howard stated that Bennington had already been to court with their energy plan and that this is one reason the Planning Commission chose this as a starting point. Howard also wanted to say we should indicate that the Town did not want to adapt the State’s energy plan. Paul Tillman stated that the Planning Commission was not going to adopt an “Enhanced” Energy Plan at this time.

Ken Blum asked what the Town was signing up for with having this energy plan. Jason gave a brief description on this but stated that it was complicated.

Jason then started to go through each section as it was presented and asked if any changes were necessary. Any changes will be collected and made to the document then presented at a future meeting.

Brian Bosenberg asked about the map that the State had for solar and would we publish this. Paul Tillman said that the map the Town would like to publish would show locations that solar or other renewable energy would not be wanted.

Beth Gorton asked about wind power and if the data from the State was accurate.

A comment was made about section 7.2.6, that Heat pumps are not renewable energy.

Terminology and definitions for wind and solar were discussed.

Section 7.3 – 7.4 Jason R said nothing has really changed since May and some data may be dated.

Pg 6 some language clarification no big changes.

Pg 7 Energy goal has some changes. Howard said there may be a few more views added to the scenic view list.

Beth Hunton asked what does community solar mean? Is it funded by the Town? Beth said her thought of community solar was like the solar at the town garage. It was asked how big is 150K project, somewhere in the area .15 acres. Julie Levy commented on community solar, in commercial solar it may have a different definition. She encourages they remove “Community”, the board agreed.

Beth Gorton asked why there is no support for wind power so far in the plan. Howard indicated that wind was not a large part of the renewable energy available in the Town. Paul Tillman said that renewable wind energy was welcome in the Town if it was available in the area and was constructed within the rules and regulation. Paul wanted to make sure that the plan encouraged all renewable sources solar, wind, water (Hydro).

A question was asked about the process for getting the State energy map. Reginal has the map and will work to reference the town pan and zoning to indicate areas to protect. The challenge will not be working with the State to change the map. We can present a modified map but will be difficult to get the State to change their map. These areas are where the “model’ says solar energy could be and may not even be close enough to a three-phase power source. It will be better to say where we do not want them instead of where they should be.

Brian B asked if we could add to this list. Jason R said yes, we can change this list if needed to add or delete items.

Pg 10 nothing really has changed since May.

Howard Beach Asked about d “decommissioned.” Jason said that the PUC generally asks for a decommissioned plan and was not sure if the town could ask for more.

On Pg 11 there is a “preferred areas” highlight where we want to see Solar Energy resources. An audience member said We should delete this and Paul Tillman agreed.

Paul Tillman asked a question about item C. He asked where the State is with the river corridor area definition. Howard beach stated that because of the dams on the river the State is waiting for the relicensing of the plants and will finish after this process.

A question was asked if solar structures are considered structures that are restricted by setbacks bylaws. Jason said that the state has their own restrictions, and they may not be as restrictive as the Towns.

Pg 12 was discussion about the scenic resource inventory list, and the screening ordinances from the Benington chapter was removed.

Pg 13 is mostly new items to look at and we will wait for a future meeting to discuss with a full board in attendance.

Mrs Henderson Asked for copies to be supplied at the library for people to look at. Paul Tillman said he would investigate working with the library to have final draft copies for people to look at throughout the planning process.

Beth Gorton commented on 7.9.1-20 and asked to have added something that would encourage public charging station on each side of the Town.

8. Town Plan – General – No changes or action currently, just a focus on the Energy chapter.
9. Bylaws – PUD Review – Ryan has complied the information and changes but has not had a chance to present the new document to the planning commission.
10. Bylaws – Conditional Use Review – Tabled for now, no work has been done on this.
11. Discussion of Items for Future Agendas – August 26th meeting will have Brian Bosenberg discussion on scenic resources.
12. Any other business that can be legally discussed – No other business discussed.

13. Adjourn –
Meeting adjourned at 8:23PM
Joseph Bublats made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:23PM.
Seconded by Paul Tillman,
Motion Passed

Respectfully Submitted by,
Paul Tillman