



CCRPC Long Range Planning Energy Sub -Committee

AGENDA

*=attached to agenda in the meeting packet

DATE: Tuesday, May 16, 2017

TIME: 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 pm

PLACE: CCRPC Office, 110 West Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT.

Attendance

Matt Burke, Charlotte

Keith Epstein, South Burlington

Jeff Forward, Richmond

Catherine McMains, Chair, Jericho

Robin Pierce, Essex

Karen Purinton, Colchester

Irene Wrenner, Essex

Melanie Needle, CCRPC

Emily Nosse-Leirer, CCRPC

Regina Mahony, CCRPC

1. Welcome + Introductions

The meeting began at

2. Review April 18, 2017 Minutes* (5 Minutes)

Edits were made to clarify a few points. Irene Wrenner made a motion to adopt the minutes as edited and Keith seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. ECOS Plan Draft Energy Element Revisions* (60 Minutes)

Melanie outlined the process for the plan throughout the rest of this month. Staff will be sending the preliminary first draft in to the Department of Public Service for initial comments at the end of May.

Climate Action Section:

Built Environment Chapter and Land Use Section:

- Melanie explained that no changes were made to this section, but that the section and CCRPC's actions related to compact development are key to lessened energy use, especially in terms of transportation. This is an area that CCRPC has a lot of influence over and is doing good work in.

Transportation Section:

- Emily explained that in most of this section, there aren't really changes to the content of the plan, but more was added to connect the dots between transportation goals and energy use.
- Keith suggested changing energy "use" to energy "source" in the discussion of natural gas for heavy duty transportation, and making the point that EVs are a decrease in fossil fuel use here because we're assuming almost 100% renewable electricity.

Energy Section:

- This section has been edited to reflect all the state’s energy goals.
- Catherine had a question about home weatherization: shouldn’t all the numbers about home weatherization match up with each other? The LEAP model says that 14% of homes will be weatherized by 2025, but the State goal is 25% of homes. So how should we condition this? The committee agreed that the 25% should be reported with a statement that progress on weatherization has been quite low and the goal will likely need to be edited in the future to reflect this
- Melanie asked the committee to discuss whether the plan does a good job describing the natural gas issue in the 90X2050 LEAP scenario on page 77 and page 85-86.
 - The committee agreed that it is the best that we can do under the current circumstances.
 - The committee asked that “aggressive weatherization” be added to the list of things that will decrease energy use from natural gas in both places, and that page 85 be edited to reflect that Chittenden County can’t meet the whole state goal for energy siting.
 - The committee discussed the challenge of overcoming customer reluctance to shift from natural gas to heat pump, and that the state needs to put either money or regulatory power towards these goals (or both!).
 - Karen said that education is one of CCRPC’s strengths and areas of influence so education on switching fuel types should be listed as well.
- Jeff Forward said that the goal in the biomass advocacy community is to have about 35% of thermal energy use coming from biomass by 2050, compared to the LEAP model which is currently showing about 14% consistently between now and 2050. This is something that we may edit the thermal energy section to reflect in the future, though this was not a conclusive decision.

Strategy 3.2.2 (80% of Growth in 15% of Land)

- Melanie asked the committee to discuss whether they agree with the statement saying that Strategy 3.2.2 does not include energy generation development (see page 98). She reiterated that the energy actions are included here based on the format of the plan, and that it would be extremely difficult to generate our renewable energy goals if we only do it in the 15% of areas planned for growth.
 - Robin restated his point that energy generation should not be trashing the landscape.
 - Karen clarified the point in this language is intended to mean that we know that 80% of renewable generation can’t be contained in 15% of land area. Perhaps we could say that wind and solar “aren’t contemplated” when we discuss this goal?
 - Another option is using the language suggested by Jim Donovan via email that “the particular requirements of solar and wind generation might not always be present in areas planned for growth.”
 - Or could we say that renewable energy generation can probably be done in a lot of areas but it’s not CCRPC’s policy to say that 80% of them has to be in the 15% of land area identified here? Should it say “land based” or “large scale”?
 - Everyone is in agreement with the intent of this statement and staff will continue to wordsmith.
 - Everyone agrees that it is good that the plan says later that we strongly encourage on-site development—and it’s possible that we could just have the paragraph discussing this on page 101 instead of having a sentence added at the beginning at all.
- **Melanie asked the committee to discuss whether the ECOS Plan should use the term “shall” to prohibit renewable energy generation development on known constraints? Is the sentence about mitigation necessary?**
 - Melanie mentioned to the committee that the LRPC made edits to the plan after the energy subcommittee packet went out, and that the LRPC is recommending “shall.”
 - Perhaps we should use the phrase “ground-truthing” instead of “site assessment”? Or “specific site assessment”? We want to make sure that it’s clear that we aren’t trying to prohibit any development until an applicant has gone through a full site assessment and actually identified the constraints that are on the ground. The committee decided on “verified by site assessment” in the

end.

- The committee discussed changes in CCRPC's mapping methodology at length. When the packet for this meeting went out, maps showed potential energy sites and constraints in the same places, and there now are separate maps for constraints and separate maps for potential.
- The committee had an extensive discussion about known constraints that may or may not be appropriate for solar or wind development.
- Regina made the point that the point of all of the work we've done here is to get towns and the region substantial deference.
- All the other nicer or more positive-sounding options here ("discourage," "not suitable," etc.) don't have regulatory weight.
- Regina reminded the committee that because this is our very first draft to the Department of Public Service, we will get feedback from them on our language which may inform our edits going forwards. Our strategy right now is to go with "shall not" right now and see what DPS says about it. This is far from the last time we will discuss these issues!
- The committee discussed the strategies of other RPCs. As far as staff knows, most other RPCs are focusing their siting language on the prime and base areas, but we're not confident enough in the data to have this kind of siting guidance.

f. Does the Plan language on substantial regional impact for energy development seem appropriate? (See page 133)

- Regina explained that CCRPC's goal with this definition of substantial deference, and our discussion of what "local known constraints" are, is to try to make sure that our regional plan is never in conflict with a local plan. However, we will have to develop a policy going forward to address how we'll be reviewing local energy plans and changes in local constraints when we approve local plans.

4. Solar/Wind Targets* (10 Minutes)

- Melanie reminded the committee that at the last meeting, the committee decided to use wind and solar targets for the county that take into account Chittenden County's share of the state's population and the county's share of the state's resource. The committee still thinks this is a good idea.
- The solar and wind goals are going to stay at the municipal level because they're acreage based so it's easy to say whether they're "possible" or not. But a municipality can meet their energy generation goal however they want.
- Matt clarified that the municipal generation targets are only for 50% of energy end use, since the state assumes that 50% will be coming from energy imports. The committee discussed that there are likely to be many municipalities that may not be able to meet their generation goals, but this plan won't reflect it right now.

5. Next Steps

The meeting adjourned at 7:05. The next meeting is scheduled for June 20 but may be cancelled.