

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2 LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE - MINUTES
3

4 DATE: Thursday, May 11, 2017
5 TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
6 PLACE: CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT
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Members Present

Alex Weinhagen, Hinesburg – PAC Rep
Chris Shaw, South Burlington – Board Rep
Heather Danis – ECOS Steering Committee Rep
Andrea Morgante, Hinesburg - Board Rep
Justin Rabidoux, South Burlington – TAC Rep
Edmund Booth - ECOS Steering Committee Rep

Staff

Regina Mahony, Planning Program Manager
Melanie Needle, Senior Planner
Eleni Churchill, Transportation Program Manager
Emily Nosse-Leirer, Planner
Charlie Baker, Executive Director

8
9 **1. Welcome and Introductions**

10 Chris Shaw called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.
11

12 **2. Approve Minutes**

13 Justin Rabidoux made a motion, seconded by Edmund Booth, to approve the minutes of April 13, 2017. No
14 further discussion. MOTION PASSED.
15

16 **3. Energy Planning**

17 Melanie Needle explained that we'll be sending this first preliminary draft energy plan to the Department of
18 Public Service by the end of the month. We will go over the discussion questions from the agenda. Also, so
19 you are aware, we've provided each municipality with data and maps for their use in meeting the Act 174
20 requirements. We can also go out and meet with any of the communities that wish for us to do so.
21

22 The questions related to the Plan are:

- 23 a. Have we best described the natural gas issue in the 90x2050 LEAP scenario? Melanie Needle explained
24 that we asked VEIC to run another LEAP model with natural gas levels consistent into the future, and the
25 results only get to about 55% renewable energy use. Melanie Needle reviewed the draft text. Chris Shaw
26 stated that we are essentially saying we can't meet the 90x2050 goal, which I he thinks is true. Alex
27 Weinhagen is fine with this as we've discussed previously. However, every region has this same issue but
28 with different fuel types. So why is it different for us – is it largely the infrastructure and the level of
29 population. Cost alone is not a good reason because costs of all fuel types are subject to change. Andrea
30 Morgante added that places without natural gas can convert to a renewable resource directly and easily
31 without centralized infrastructure in place; and I wouldn't want to see natural gas expanded to areas where
32 it doesn't exist now. Andrea Morgante also questioned the text that identifies natural gas as a win from a
33 greenhouse gas emission perspective. Staff will research this. The LRPC asked that Staff include a source
34 of the information for whatever it is. There was a discussion about the dichotomy between the Department
35 of Public Service approval of natural gas expansion projects and the 90x2050 renewable energy use goal.
36 Staff stated that regardless of the natural gas issue we will work toward meeting the energy goals by more
37 dense development, encouraging more localized systems (i.e. McNeil Generating Plant) and other things
38 within CCRPC's control. Charlie Baker suggested that we close the loop on this part of the Plan with a
39 statement like: "In order to meet the 90x2050 goal it means customers will be switching to heat pumps,
40 which will require market incentives (and regulatory changes) to make this happen."
41 b. Have we adequately covered the opportunity our region has to lay the ground work for making a positive
42 impact on transportation energy? There was a suggestion for funding and incentives to add charging
43 stations in existing homes rather than just new construction to help with the costs of adding a circuit
44 breaker, electricity to the garage, etc. Justin Rabidoux suggested that we expand beyond modal choices,
45 and how we power them. We should describe the energy savings we can capture from improvements to
46 the system more generally such as: moving traffic more efficiently and quickly, better light bulbs,

1 Intelligent Transportation Systems, etc. A lot of those transportation projects are relatively easy fixes and
2 just need money, and we can influence that. Again, Staff will research natural gas and methane burning
3 ghg – if it is cleaner at all, how much cleaner is it? Add to page 77, single yellow highlight page: Also
4 incentivize TDM strategies with carrots and sticks through legislative changes like excise taxes, etc.

- 5 c. Do you agree with the statement saying that Strategy 3.2.2 does not include energy generation
6 development? (see intro to Section 3.2.2) – change “energy generation facilities” to “solar and wind
7 generation facilities”. Otherwise stick with this sentence for now.
- 8 d. Should the ECOS Plan language use the term “shall” to prohibit renewable energy generation development
9 on known constraints? Is the sentence about mitigation necessary? Charlie Baker explained that use of
10 shall is a policy shift for CCRPC because our Plan doesn’t include any “shalls” currently. Alex
11 Weinhausen added that use of shall makes sense in this circumstance since you need to be clear in order to
12 get substantial deference, which is the whole purpose of going through this effort. There was discussion
13 about the difference between known constraints and possible constraints. It was suggested that you still
14 use “shall” for possible constraints to require site assessments to ensure your resources are protected or
15 minimized (see page 101). Also need to reference the maps and lists of constraints here; and maybe define
16 “possible” and “known” in footnote or something. Also, potentially pull out “preferred sites” from page
17 101 – and/or add a sentence or two about what those sites are, if we get any local preferred sites. There
18 was a suggestion to add an action about public investments for rooftop solar on schools. There was some
19 discussion about whether we would or wouldn’t want to see public dollar investment in private buildings.
20 Lastly, does encouraging solar generation on previously developed sites not consider our rural areas? The
21 LRPC decided the language is good as is (last highlight on page 101).
- 22 e. If we use the word “shall” to prohibit generation on known constraint areas then do we have a
23 contradiction with using the State’s definition of known constraints? The guidance from the Department
24 of Public Service defines a known constraint as “signals likely, though not absolute, unsuitability for
25 development based on statewide or local regulations or designated critical resources”, however we are
26 intending them to be absolute. Alex Weinhausen suggested that on page 128 we explain the state “known
27 constraint” definition, and add that Chittenden County’s definition is more absolute. Also explain within
28 the definitions that the resources are defined by site investigation, the maps are just a starting point.
29 Discussion evolved to how we map this. Can we combine both state and local known constraints and
30 symbolize it in the same way? Or make a final conclusion map? Also, do we still need to map the
31 generation resource areas at all, because the siting decisions will be made based on the constraint maps
32 rather than the generation areas? Staff will think about this more.
- 33 f. Does the Plan language on substantial regional impact for energy development seem appropriate? (See
34 page 24). Discussion about just referring to the maps and whether the maps should be the constraints
35 rather than the generation maps, and/or the shall policy statement. The draft Plan states that the local
36 constraints may change over time as the municipalities do their local planning, and therefore it may not be
37 likely that a conflict will arise between the Regional Plan and a local Plan. Staff will think about whether
38 we have to address this within the SRI at all. If we do include something here about energy, we should
39 simply refer to the constraints not the map. Also had a discussion about “Future Land Use Plan” – it
40 should just be the map and potentially the Section 3.2.2 policy.

41 42 **4. Next Meeting**

43 June 8, 2017 from 8:30am to 10:00am.

44 **10. Adjourn**

45 The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

46
47 Respectfully submitted, Regina Mahony