

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
2 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE - MINUTES  
3

4 DATE: Wednesday, March 23, 2022  
5 TIME: 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
6 PLACE: Virtual Meeting via Zoom with link as published on the agenda and in Main Conference Room at  
7 CCRPC (no one attended in person)  
8

**Members Present:**

Joss Besse, Bolton  
Eric Vorwald, Winooski  
Virginia Clarke, Richmond  
Meagan Tuttle, Burlington  
Larry Lewack, Charlotte  
Alex Weinhagen, Hinesburg  
Paul Conner, South Burlington  
Cathynn LaRose, Colchester  
Katherine Sonnick, Jericho

Adele Gravitz, Shelburne  
Zach Maia, Colchester  
Jon Ignatowski, Bolton  
Charles Dillard, Burlington  
Darren Schibler, Essex

**Staff:**

Regina Mahony, Planning Program Manager  
Melanie Needle, Senior Planner  
Taylor Newton, Senior Planner

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10  
11 **1. Welcome and Introductions**

12 Joss Besse called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.  
13

14 **2. Approval of January 12, 2022 Minutes**

15  
16 Eric Vorwald made a motion, seconded by Alex Weinhagen to approve the January 12, 2022 minutes. No further  
17 discussion. MOTION PASSED.  
18

19 **3. Town of Bolton Enhanced Energy Plan Review**

20 Bolton is amending their Town Plan to include the Enhanced Energy Plan and is seeking a Determination of Energy  
21 Compliance as well. The Plan amendment documents are [here](#).  
22

23 Regina Mahony opened the public hearing and kept it open in case anyone from the public comes.  
24

25 Taylor provided an overview of the staff summary. Taylor stated that the draft energy plan was prepared largely by  
26 CCRPC and meets the enhanced energy plan criteria. There are also a few land use changes as described in the staff  
27 report. Jon Ignatowski provided an overview of the timing of this amendment - The planning process for Bolton's  
28 Energy Plan began in June of 2019, and the Planning Commission held a public hearing for the Energy Plan on  
29 January 21, 2020 with 14 members of the public attending. However, due to errors with the warning of the public  
30 hearing, Jon encouraged the Bolton Select Board to not approve the Energy Plan and to properly warn new hearings.  
31 The Energy Plan has not changed since January 21, 2020. CCRPC Staff finds that because the Town of Bolton has  
32 been actively working on its enhanced energy plan for several years under the 2017 standards and held a public  
33 hearing prior to the 2022 CEP (and associated new standards) being published, the enhanced energy plan is being  
34 reviewed under the 2017 standards. Jon Ignatowski added the Bolton Planning Commission public hearing will take  
35 place on April 21, 2022.  
36

37 PAC comments/questions included:

- 38 • Does the plan include any special provisions for no go zones for renewable energy? CCRPC indicated that is  
39 correct, however, the plan includes the state constraints. Where will the solar go? Jon Ignatowski indicated  
40 that the most likely location is Route 2 in the valley and there is a solar array happening there now. Is the  
41 plan calling for solar in forested areas? Melanie Needle stated that Map 9 includes potential wind and solar  
42 locations and this basically shows the few areas in Town that could accommodate solar.

- 1 • Do the renewable energy targets include all existing and future residential and commercial needs? Melanie  
2 Needle stated the targets are based on actual energy consumption, but this does not include a forecast of  
3 future energy need.
- 4 • How will the land use changes in this Bolton Plan update work with future land use map in the ECOS Plan  
5 update? Taylor Newton described the proposed changes at Bolton Valley – essentially a slight expansion at  
6 both the northern and southern part of the existing “Village Planning Area” on the ECOS Plan. There are also  
7 some slight corrections being addressed in the Town plan. Taylor added that CCRPC would likely make  
8 these changes to the ECOS Future Land Use Map in the next update. Larry Lewack also provided more  
9 information about the Bolton Valley Master Plan and the associated changes. Regina Mahony added that if  
10 these were significant changes that shifted land from a rural planning area to an area planned for growth, that  
11 would be more heavily scrutinized because CCRPC would not necessarily be open to a big adjustment in the  
12 ECOS Plan. However, these are relatively minor adjustments that we see from time to time as the  
13 municipalities make refinements in the Town Plans.

14  
15 The public hearing was closed.

16  
17 Alex Weinhagen made a motion, seconded by Meagan Tuttle, that the PAC finds that the proposed Town of Bolton  
18 Town Plan Energy Elements (draft 9/25/2020) meets the requirements of the enhanced energy planning standards  
19 (“determination”) set forth in 24 V.S.A. §4352. Upon notification that the municipality has adopted the amendments,  
20 CCRPC staff will review the plan and any information relevant to the adoption process. If staff determines that  
21 substantive changes have been made, the materials will be forwarded to the PAC for review. Otherwise the PAC  
22 recommends that the draft Energy Plan should be forwarded to the CCRPC Board for an affirmative determination of  
23 energy compliance. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED.

#### 24 25 **4. Housing Data Table for the 2023 ECOS Plan**

26 Regina Mahony stated that at the last meeting the PAC reviewed the draft of the housing section for the 2023 ECOS  
27 Plan update. There was a discussion about including a data table that compares municipal housing to the County  
28 totals, and the Building Homes Together goal. A draft of this table was included in the packet.

29  
30 Staff gave a brief overview of the table and asked for comments. The PAC had the following questions and  
31 comments:

- 32 • Does the new affordable construction include conversions of existing buildings? Staff stated, yes, this  
33 includes existing residential that has been brought into a perpetually affordable portfolio such as shared  
34 equity and a naturally occurring affordable project on Dorset Street. Melanie Needle will check on hotel  
35 conversions.
- 36 • There was a discussion regarding ‘small a affordable’ – meaning homes that are affordable without subsidy  
37 or regulation such as mobile homes. This data is missing that component and it’s a big component. Regina  
38 Mahony stated that staff has thought about trying to capture this through an analysis of assessed values and  
39 it’s been difficult thus far. Melanie Needle added that we do have mobile homes in the database and could  
40 add those as a column.
- 41 • Calling out the five years of the Building Homes Together campaign loses site of all work done prior to that.  
42 Melanie Needle added that the first “affordable” column includes all the total subsidized/regulated affordable  
43 in the County.
- 44 • There was a comment about whether this will be helpful or not since many of the smaller municipalities  
45 aren’t going to build a significant number of new homes, and that isn’t where the services are. Regina added  
46 that Staff will also try to bring in a planning area and/or bus service lens to make the geographic component  
47 into the mix. Regina also added that addressing affordability is still an issue for all of the towns, and equity  
48 should be at the forefront.
- 49 • There was a suggestion to clarify that the table isn’t capturing everything as it will likely be hard to capture  
50 ‘little a affordable’ in full.
- 51 • There was a suggestion to switch the column header from “affordable constructed” to something like  
52 “affordable created” to try to make it clear that it isn’t only brand new construction.
- 53

1 For reference: [Complete Housing Data Dashboard](#); [Building Homes Together Data Dashboard](#).

2  
3 **5. Legislative Items**

4 Regina Mahony pointed folks to the VPA legislative committee’s weekly update, and highlighted a few items:

- 5 • “Budget Adjustment Act for current fiscal year – Signed into law by the Governor on 3/16/22. The final
- 6 version still included a provision for an additional \$250,000 for municipal planning grants managed by
- 7 DHCD. Presumably, this will allow DHCD to make additional awards to MPG applications that weren’t
- 8 selected in December.”
- 9 • H.606 – Community Resilience and Biodiversity Protection – calls for a certain percentage of land to be
- 10 conserved.
- 11 • Act 250 Reform – There are a few bills on the table already. Still moving – change to appeals process
- 12 (H.492); and S.234 – look at state designation programs, includes the road rule, etc.
- 13 • S.226 – Omnibus housing – intended to ease the way for more NDAs; tax credits; bylaw modernization
- 14 grants
- 15 • H.518 - Municipal Fuel Switching Grant Program. This is intended to provide municipalities with funding
- 16 for weatherization and electrification of thermal systems in municipally owned buildings. Passed the house
- 17 on 3/17 and sent over to the Senate.

18  
19 Alex Weinhagen asked if CCRPC will weigh in on the road rule in S.234. Regina Mahony stated that she wasn’t sure  
20 CCRPC had a specific opinion on it, but will review previous Act 250 statements.

21  
22 **6. Members Items Open Forum**

23  
24 Alex Weinhagen stated that Hinesburg has been getting communications from housing partners to do projects. Have  
25 others been contacted by folks?

26 Essex – had a hotel conversion; Essex Junction – Chittenden Crossing project.

27 Winooski – have had housing partners ask for quickly advancing amendments to regulations to support future  
28 developments.

29  
30 Virginia Clarke stated that Richmond has been getting asks from owners of commercial spaces to go to residential.  
31 Never had this ask before. Is this happening in other places? How do we feel about this? Should we be reserving  
32 commercial and if so, for what? Cymone Haiju stated that Milton has had pressure on the Route 7 corridor to convert  
33 from commercial to residential. They made some changes including establishing a minimum first floor requirement  
34 of 12’ minimum to 24’ maximum, so the first floor could convert from residential to commercial in the future.

35 Darren Schibler indicated that they’ve had a similar experience in Essex lately. Though they haven’t ever seen a  
36 conversion happen in that way. Darren suggested thinking about the experience of the residents if they are going to  
37 be on the first floor. Virginia Clarke asked if others are concerned about losing all commercial? Darren Schibler  
38 stated that their bigger concern now is the overbuild of commercial space and the vacancies associated with that.

39 Taylor Newton added that Williston is taking a similar approach to Milton; but they are requiring that if the first floor  
40 is residential that it sit 3’ up above the ground floor for privacy from the sidewalks. Alex Weinhagen cautioned to not  
41 let all of the commercial space go away; because when the new residents come, ultimately there will be a greater  
42 need for more commercial services. Cymone Haiju agreed.

43  
44 **7. Regional Act 250/Section 248 Projects on the Horizon.**

45 Joss Besse asked the PAC to email Regina and Taylor any Act 250/Section 248 updates.

46  
47 **8. Other Business**

- 48 a. Quick discussion: do folks prefer to continue to meet virtually, or would you like to start meeting in person?
- 49 Approximately 7 folks would prefer an in person meeting. Others expressed interest in virtual and expressed
- 50 the added benefit of energy conservation without driving. There was a suggestion to not do hybrid; just pick
- 51 one or the other. Regina stated that we will likely stick with virtual for now as the hybrid model doesn’t work
- 52 perfectly at CCRPC, and not all want to come in.

- 53 b. **Green Justice Zones Forum** on Wednesday, March 23 from 6-7:30 pm. A Green Justice Zone is the

1 concept of making investments in sustainability and equity in neighborhoods that have been disinvested in  
2 and are overburdened with pollution, and/or have higher exposure to risks associated with climate change.  
3 These initiatives use data mapping, community design and a participatory budgeting process to support  
4 community revitalization in communities who have experienced the most harms by the current climate crisis.  
5 Vermont's 11 regional planning commissions have partnered with Rights and Democracy to explore the  
6 concept and how it can be applied in our state. Guests include representatives from the Green Justice Zone  
7 efforts in the city of Providence, which has begun implementing its Climate Justice Plan. Please follow this  
8 link to register: <https://www.mobilize.us/rightsdemocracy/event/444210/>

- 9 c. Reminder – if you haven't yet submitted your **development activity for 2021** please do so.  
10 d. **VT Bond Bank Capital Planning Forum**: April 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>, 9am to 1pm. See the attached flyer; and register  
11 [here](#).  
12 e. **Upcoming Housing Convening** – Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 6pm: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83565159394>

13  
14 **9. Adjourn**

15 Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.

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17 Respectfully submitted, Regina Mahony