

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

4 DATE: Thursday, August 17, 2023  
5 TIME: 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
6 PLACE: Virtual Meeting via Zoom with link as published on the agenda  
7

<u>Members Present:</u> Joss Besse, Bolton Charles Dillard, Burlington Larry Lewack, Charlotte Cathyann LaRose, Colchester Chris Yuen, Essex Junction Katherine Sonnick, Essex Town Alex Weinhalten, Hinesburg Barbara Elliot, Huntington Linda Blasch, Jericho Cymone Bedford, Milton Keith Osborne, Richmond (at 3:15pm) Aaron DeNamur, Shelburne Paul Conner & Kelsey Peterson, South Burlington Melinda Scott, Williston Eric Vorwald, Winooski	<u>Staff:</u> Charlie Baker, Executive Director Eleni Churchill, Transportation Program Manager Ann Janda, Senior Energy Project Manager Sarah Muskin, Planner Melanie Needle, Senior Planner Taylor Newton, Planning Program Manager Darren Schibler, Senior Planner  <u>Guests</u> Dan Albrecht, South Burlington Resident Amanda Froeschle, VT Department of Health Chris Shaw, CCRPC Rep for South Burlington Amy Grover, Bolton Town Clerk Jeff Nick, South Burlington Property Owner Stephen (no last name given) James Leas, South Burlington Resident (at 3:55pm)
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8 **1. Welcome and Introductions**

9 P. Connor called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m.

10 **2. Approval of June 14, 2023 Minutes**

11 E. Vorwald made a motion, seconded by K. Sonnick to approve the prior meeting's minutes. No further  
12 discussion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.  
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14

15 **3. PAC Chair Election**

16 J. Besse made a motion, seconded by E. Vorwald, to elect Paul Conner to the PAC chair position. All in favor  
17 except P. Conner abstained.

18 P. Conner made a motion, seconded by J. Besse, to elect Alex Weinhalten to the PAC vice-chair position. All in  
19 favor except A. Weinhalten abstained.  
20

21 **4. Draft 2024 South Burlington City Plan**

22 A. Weinhalten acted as chair for this agenda item because P. Conner is representing the City in the discussion  
23 about the draft 2024 City Plan. T. Newton suggested that CCRPC staff make their recommendations before public  
24 hearing; A. Weinhalten agrees.  
25

26 M. Needle shared the findings of the CCRPC staff memo regarding review of the proposed 2024 South  
27 Burlington City Plan. M. Needle stated that staff recommended regional approval of the draft 2024 South  
28 Burlington City Plan, confirmation of South Burlington's planning process; and issuance of an affirmative  
29 determination of compliance with the enhanced energy planning standards set forth in 24 V.S.A. §4352. Overall,  
30 the South Burlington City Plan conforms to the ECOS Plan, but there were some areas of differences between the  
31 regional planning areas and the city's future land use planning areas. M. Needle acknowledged that the CCRPC  
32 is working on a revised regional planning area map for the draft 2024 ECOS Plan that capture updates the City  
33 has made to their zoning districts. M. Needle also explained that the regional planning areas defer to the  
34 underlying municipal zoning for a particular regional planning area and that particular uses and density are  
35 determined by municipal zoning. She also noted that CCRPC made some recommendations to improve  
36 readability of the plan.

1 M. Needle reported that the enhanced energy plan meets all standards. CCRPC will need to be notified upon  
2 adoption. M. Needle noted that the equity impact assessment and the forest block evaluation were the new  
3 standards that South Burlington included in the plan. CCRPC also included some additional recommendations,  
4 especially given the regional energy plan is in a draft stage. M. Needle also noted that South Burlington adopted a  
5 Climate Action Plan that addressed many of the elements of the enhanced energy plan.

6  
7 A. Weinhagen opened the public hearing and invited members of the public to speak first before the PAC:  
8

9 J. Nick commented that he is in the commercial real estate business in the County and South Burlington (he owns  
10 a parcel on Hinesburg Rd). He stated that there is a lack of inventory for industrial land in the region (referenced  
11 in the Allen & Brooks Report and by Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation). J. Nick highlighted that there is  
12 only a 10–15-year inventory of industrial land on the market, and he thinks this will be an issue for job growth.

13  
14 J. Nick stated that he believes climate action goals are out of alignment between the regional plan and South  
15 Burlington’s City Plan (specifically in the Future Land Use plans). He said that the newest zoning did not reflect  
16 the active City Plan but did meet Regional Plan goals. He said the proposed 2024 City Plan takes away the  
17 opportunity for a live-work environment, which is a problem especially because South Burlington is in the center  
18 of the county. J. Nick said he hoped to continue the discussion with the City about his issues with the proposed  
19 City Plan.

20  
21 A. Weinhagen responded that the concern about enough industrial land base is important. However, he thinks the  
22 mixed-use land depicted in the Future Land Use Map seems substantial. He asked how much of these areas are  
23 still ripe for development/redevelopment/infill.

24  
25 J. Nick responded that the area is 15 years or less away from running out of industrial land for job growth. He  
26 mentioned that the plan is forcing people to drive greater distances to get to their jobs, which is an example of  
27 how the future land use plan is not in line with the climate action plan.

28  
29 K. Peterson pointed out that they have added a new land use type: South Burlington used to have a  
30 commercial/industrial category and they now have “commercial industrial with supportive uses” (shown in  
31 purple), to recognize that a lot of industrial uses are compatible with housing (offices, lighter industrial use, etc.)  
32 AND “commercial industrial” only (shown in blue) with the understanding that these types of uses are not  
33 suitable to be near housing (24 hr. trucking operations, manufacturing, etc.). South Burlington added more purple  
34 area to support an integrated land use ecosystem, and restricted blue areas.

35  
36 K Peterson also noted that the next step down development intensity (shown in orange – Principally Residential,  
37 Higher Scale) is not intended to be only residential. She mentioned that vibrant and thriving residential  
38 neighborhoods do need appropriately scaled commercial uses.

39  
40 Regarding infill: K. Peterson said there is a lot of opportunity in the purple (Commercial/Industrial with  
41 Supporting Uses) and blue areas (Commercial-Industrial), especially in the east side of the city. As currently  
42 zoned, this area has large lots, but there is a lot of open space between buildings, that would allow additional uses  
43 in these areas.

44  
45 A. Weinhagen suggested that the plan should be dressed up a bit with a focus on pictures and readability. He  
46 mentioned that readability is key for allowing community member to access the document. K. Peterson said that a  
47 new communications staff member will work on nicer formatting and some pictures later in the process.

48  
49 A. Weinhagen asked about the Shelburne Rd area in the red (Balanced Mixed Residential & Commercial High  
50 Scale), and asked about other industrial uses that might go well in that region. P. Conner responded that the red  
51 along Shelburne Rd is a compilation of other uses already (breweries, distributors, car dealerships, etc). He noted

1 that the intent of the red areas is to support a mixed-use environment is somewhat similar to the City Center (new  
2 town center) area.

3  
4 D. Albrecht, speaking as South Burlington resident, thanked South Burlington staff for outreach and engagement  
5 and said that the neighborhood descriptions were great. He didn't speak to regional conformity, but he did want to  
6 say that the original draft talked about 4 "values" to guide that plan, and then when the draft got published,  
7 climate change was focused as the overriding value. He asked why this was done? He also expressed concern that  
8 not all city residents share in the burden of fighting climate change, suggesting that there is greater room for infill  
9 and commercial nodes that could be put in place in the Eastern part of the city to reduce the need for  
10 transportation (driving) to other areas.

11  
12 Stephen (in chat) asked "How can you approve this Plan before all public hearings at SB Planning Comm and  
13 City Council have been completed?" A. Weinhagen responded that this is standard for PAC to review a draft  
14 document to make a recommendation to the CCRPC Board before local adoption. Any action on the  
15 recommendation by the CCRPC Board will occur after the plan has been local approved.

16  
17 A. Weinhagen closed the public hearing at 3:08 pm

18  
19 MOTION: *The PAC finds that the draft 2024 South Burlington City Plan meets all statutory requirements for*  
20 *CCRPC regional approval, and that the municipality's planning process meets all statutory requirements for*  
21 *CCRPC confirmation. The PAC also finds that the draft 2024 South Burlington City Plan will meet the*  
22 *requirements of the enhanced energy planning standards ("determination") set forth in 24 V.S.A. §4352.*

23  
24 *E. Vorwald made the above motion, seconded by Joss Besse. All in favor except L. Blasch and P. Conner*  
25 *abstained. The motion passed.*

26  
27 **5. Draft ECOS Enhanced Energy Plan**

28 P. Conner stepped back in as chair. M. Needle and D. Schibler presented the updated ECOS Enhanced Energy  
29 Plan. The presentation was intended to give PAC an overview on how the enhanced energy planning process and  
30 how the ECOS Enhanced Energy Plan has changed and been updated by the CCRPC Long-range Planning  
31 Committee (LRPC) and its energy subcommittee.

32  
33 M.Needle covered the background of enhanced energy planning (Act 174 in 2016). The first time the region  
34 adopted an enhanced energy plan was in 2018. During that time, key siting and suitability policies, and general  
35 goals were developed. The 2024 update process included an Energy Sub-Committee that sent their  
36 recommendations to the LRPC. LRPC reviewed the plan and their comments will be added to the draft plan in the  
37 coming days. M. Needle then reviewed proposed changes (mapping, pathways, equity assessment, analysis and  
38 targets, and municipal generation targets)

39  
40 P.Conner asked about the sections that encourage the PUC to change wind sounds rules. He noted that the bullets  
41 under the impacted community's header don't seem to fit. He said he will follow-up with questions on this with  
42 CCRPC staff. P. Conner also asked if setting the renewable energy generation targets is decided as a state policy  
43 or a regional decision. M. Needle responded that the targets for municipalities are decided by the regions not the  
44 state. P. Conner replied that he understands the logic but noted that the targets pose a challenge for communities,  
45 like South Burlington, that are already trying to meet many different goals (forest blocks, housing, etc.). He said  
46 that some municipalities can't meet all the goals because there are competing uses for the same land area. D.  
47 Schibler added that municipalities should be encouraged to reach beyond their targets/goals.

48  
49 M. Needle asked PAC to review the draft plan and submit comments to CCRPC staff by October 1<sup>st</sup>.  
50

Commented [SM1]: I wasn't sure what he was referring to here...

Commented [MN2R1]: I will follow up with him to find out what his concern is.

1 **6. S.100 / Act 47 – Overview of Studies and Changes to Municipal Planning & Zoning**

2 T. Newton and D. Schibler presented on the HOME Act to address how municipalities will need to meet  
 3 requirements through zoning. T. Newton noted that the deadlines for implementation changed (Effective date is  
 4 now July 1, 2023 (except the parking section which is still effective on December 1, 2024)), so there is more  
 5 urgency. He also mentioned that CCRPC staff are available to talk with municipalities about the Act to help  
 6 support bylaw updates.

7  
 8 D. Schibler reviewed emergency shelters and housing assistance provisions. A. Weinhagen asked if emergency  
 9 shelters are in use in Chittenden County? C. Dillard said Burlington does have some that are permitted in some  
 10 residential neighborhoods. C. Bedford said Milton was discussing this topic recently. C. LaRose said Colchester  
 11 is keeping an eye on the impacts of the hotel provision. . In Colchester, hotels are commercial uses but there are  
 12 some areas where hotels are a permitted use, but not located in residential districts. Colchester is watching the  
 13 permanency of using hotels for housing.

14  
 15 D. Schibler reviewed the definition of duplexes. T. Newton stressed that the intent was to allow duplexes as  
 16 permitted uses, but the bill used language that allows duplexes as conditional uses. A. Weinhagen raised the  
 17 question of density vs. dimensional standards. T. Newton said duplexes should be allowed on any lot regardless  
 18 of the density standard. This also seems to also be the case for multi-unit housing. C. LaRose talked about the  
 19 lack of clarity in the language and reported she is concerned about the slippery slope of using density and  
 20 dwelling units as interchangeable terms.

21  
 22 Regarding Multi-Unit Dwellings: J. Besse asked if there is new clarity about public vs private water and sewer  
 23 system access? T. Newton responded the act is strictly referring to municipal systems.

24  
 25 Per request, CCRPC staff will add this topic to the next meeting to continue to review provisions of the Act.

26  
 27 **7. Members Items Open Forum**

28 None.

29  
 30 **8. Other Business**

31 a. **Regional Act 250 / Section 248 Projects on the Horizon** – PAC members were asked to e-mail  
 32 Taylor and Darren about any such projects.

33  
 34 b. **November Meeting Date**  
 35 PAC moved the November PAC meeting to November 15, 2023 due to conflict with NNECAPA.

36  
 37 c. **ECOS Plan Update**  
 38 Discussed as an earlier agenda item.

39  
 40 d. **Essential of Land Use Training**  
 41 T. Newton reminded PAC members that CCRPC staff are available to conduct these trainings, which  
 42 can be tailored to specific interests of the municipality.

43  
 44 e. **Updated Regional & Municipal Energy Data and Maps**  
 45 M. Needle noted that CCRPC has LEAP data for the county level. The data will be disaggregated to  
 46 the municipal level sometime in the fall.

47  
 48 f. **FEMA Flood Map & Bylaw Updates**  
 49 A Work Map meeting (the formal process for FEMA to adopt updated floodplain maps) has been  
 50 postponed until January 2024 due to the summer flooding events. RPC staff stated that municipalities

1 that are interested in assistance to support NFIP map and bylaw updates in FY24 should contact  
2 Taylor.

3  
4 P. Conner requested a CCRPC staff member add a couple sentences for this project scope to give  
5 PAC an idea of how they want to respond. T. Newton gave a brief update- just updating 100-year.  
6 Targeted on certain stream segments. D. Schibler will send out a map later this week showing the  
7 area of focused FEMA study to PAC members.

8  
9 **g. Building Homes Together 2.0 Campaign and Year 2022 Housing Update**  
10 M. Needles will email the new BHT information to PAC members.

11  
12 Returning to the South Burlington City Plan, A Weinhagen stepped in again as chair. J. Leas asked about the  
13 FLU map color changes for Wheeler Park. P. Conner answered that following a public vote, South Burlington did  
14 a land exchange a couple years ago.

15  
16 A. Weinhagen adjourned the meeting at 4:03 pm.

17  
18 Respectfully submitted, Sarah Muskin