

PLANNING COMMISSION
PRELIMINARY MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

April 18, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alan Couch, Chair	Alan Isaacson
Terry Carter	Logan Nicoll

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Norm Vanasse

STAFF PRESENT:

Rose Goings

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jason Rasmussen	Sharon Farr - LPC-TV	Lisha Klaiber, Recorder
-----------------	----------------------	-------------------------

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Alan Couch opened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL BY RECORDING SECRETARY

A. All Planning Commission members present, except Norman Vanasse.

3. APPROVE MINUTES

A. The minutes to be approved are from the meeting of March 21, 2017.

B. Terry Carter pointed out the clarification below.

- i. Item 6R should read: "...She mentioned that we had done a survey a few years ago that went out with the tax bills. They would need to talk to the Select Board about this."

C. **MOTION by Terry Carter and seconded by Logan Nicoll to approve the minutes March 21, 2017 as amended. Motion passed unanimously.**

4. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

A. There were none.

5. ENERGY CHAPTER

- A. Alan Couch noted that Jason Rasmussen has sent new maps.
- B. Jason Rasmussen said that there are 2 utility service areas in Ludlow, Green Mountain Power and Ludlow Electric. He said that the map shows the dams that may generate hydropower at some point. He advised that the permitting process for hydropower is long, not easy and expensive.
- C. Alan Isaacson asked if there is enough flow at out of the flood control dams for hydropower.
- D. Jason Rasmussen said it is a theoretical potential and there are no numbers available. He said he does know if there is enough flow, but he'd look at if the board is interested. With the new state standards, towns do not have to look at hydropower.
- E. Alan Isaacson said that although he likes hydropower, he is leery of putting something on our maps that may not be feasible.
- F. Alan Couch said if it is not required, we don't have to put it on the maps.
- G. Jason Rasmussen said they could leave the dams on the map with a note that they are there for information purposes only.
- H. Alan Couch said if they are not required, don't include them.
- I. Jason Rasmussen referred to the maps and indicated that the ridgelines have been included. The map shows where the wind potential is the highest within Ludlow at levels of 30, 50 and 70 meters. The intent is not to say, this is where we want wind towers, but just to show locations where the wind speed is better. You have to decide what you want and where you want it and what you want to protect. There are good wind potential sites outside the ridgelines. He added that you also do not have to include wind because the current governor is not in favor of it. You can do all solar. You can look at residential scale wind towers. What must be included in the town plan is that your goal is to be at 90% renewable energy by 2050.
- J. Terry Carter noted that most of the better wind potential sites are not on Okemo.
- K. Jason Rasmussen said we removed resource areas like river corridors, wetlands and wildlife habitats.
- L. Alan Isaacson asked if they could also remove the ski trails from the map.
- M. Jason Rasmussen said he would try.
- N. Logan Nicoll said the summit shows secondary potential.
- O. Alan Isaacson said that he thinks that with Ranger Solar, we may have met our commercial requirement.
- P. Alan Isaacson asked if it matters if we are not using the power.
- Q. Jason Rasmussen said he is not sure if it matters.
- R. Alan Isaacson said if it doesn't matter, Ludlow can say we don't want any more commercial renewable energy projects.
- S. Jason Rasmussen said that the total regional target is 194,612 MW hours, with Ludlow's target 22,000 MW hours. He said he doesn't know if you can close the door on any more (with the addition of Ranger Solar) but maybe you can concentrate on residential.
- T. Alan Isaacson said we may be able to say we don't want any more industrial utility scale , but encourage residential wind and solar.
- U. Logan Nicoll asked about the numbers.
- V. Jason Rasmussen said they look at the region and the 10 towns, population and how much solar potential they have.
- W. Alan Isaacson said that Ludlow has more solar potential than other towns.
- X. Jason Rasmussen said the 2nd highest in the region.
- Y. Terry Carter mentioned having Ludlow Electric construct their own.

- Z. Rose Goings said they were approached. She asked what science is behind the plotting of solar locations, noting that the Dean Brown Industrial Park was not included.
- AA. Jason Rasmussen said that solar potential is another model and they have also removed resources from that map.
- BB. Alan Isaacson noted that Dean Brown is down in the hollow and year round sunlight may be limited by Soapstone Mountain.
- CC. Logan Nicoll said there is lesser potential in hollows and the north sides of hills.
- DD. Alan Couch said Brown is one of the few industrial areas in town and we may not want to use that area for solar panels.
- EE. Jason Rasmussen said that the model looks at slope direction and steepness. There is some potential there and developing the park is limited. They would need a new bridge and roads. You can identify the preferred sites for solar panels. He asked about encouraging residential units. Do they want roof top or ground mounted units.
- FF. Terry Carter said ground and rooftop.
- GG. Alan Isaacson said rooftop only, not ground in the village.
- HH. Logan Nicoll agreed, only rooftop in the village.
- II. Jason Rasmussen asked how they want to describe the village.
- JJ. Terry Carter said by its boundaries.
- KK. Rose Goings said not in the Preservation District.
- LL. Terry Carter agreed.
- MM. Jason Rasmussen asked about the rest of the town.
- NN. Alan Isaacson said residential only, wind and solar.
- OO. Jason Rasmussen asked about community scale projects.
- PP. Terry Carter said leave town owned property open.
- QQ. Jason Rasmussen said the Economic Development Corp. is leaving that open for other large scale projects and we should leave it open.
- RR. Terry Carter said it would depend on the size of the project. She said limit town owned to 500 KW outside the village.
- SS. Alan Isaacson asked if there is any town owned property outside the village.
- TT. Logan Nicoll said not presently. He said that West Hill is in the Community Preservation (Zoning map calls that District Proprietary Municipal) but a lot of the land around it is privately owned.
- UU. Jason Rasmussen said that if you get an application for another large project in the future, what you want to put in the plan.
- i. Immediate screening
 - ii. View shed analysis
 - iii. Decommissioning requirements
 - iv. Maintenance
- VV. Rose Goings suggested checking out Enterprise Fund contributions. They started it with Ranger Solar.
- WW. Alan Isaacson said it may be negotiable.
- XX. Jason Rasmussen said he would check.
- YY. Rose Goings said she would like Jason Rasmussen to check about the Dean Brown area. If it is not town owned or if it was missed on the map, can we add it.
- ZZ. Alan Isaacson said the previous map shows it as industrial.
- AAA. Rose Goings said you didn't specify districts for town owned property. The Industrial Park is not town owned. If the solar potential is viable, it would be a good site for a solar project. They had done a feasibility study and only 5 to 8 acres are good for development. She asked if LaValleys or Jeld Wen can do rooftop solar.

- BBB. Terry Carter said it seems like it would be an appropriate place.
- CCC. Jason Rasmussen said do they want industrial uses like biomass or solar in the Industrial District.
- DDD. Terry Carter said it depends on where the wood is coming from.
- EEE. Logan Nicoll said there is no train station in town, the wood would be coming by truck.
- FFF. Jason Rasmussen asked if they want biomass.
- GGG. Rose Goings said to leave it open
- HHH. Logan Nicoll agreed.
- III. Terry Carter asked about geothermal.
- JJJ. Jason Rasmussen said they can talk about it.
- KKK. Alan Isaacson asked how we control what people put in, do we ask people to get permits.
- LLL. Jason Rasmussen said if it is tied into the grid, it is regulated by the PSB.
- MMM. Rose Goings said if it is off the grid, we do have them get a permit, it's in the zoning regulations under renewable energy. She added that there is nothing in the regulations about solar and that should be added. You can call it a structure.
- NNN. Alan Isaacson said we do need to add it to zoning. He said no ground mounted units in the village, but roof tops are okay. People can put ground mounted units in the rest of the town. We need to get this in the regulations as soon as possible.
- OOO. Jason Rasmussen asked them how they can reduce fossil fuel for heating. He said geothermal is good for new construction and cold weather heat pumps are good for refits.
- PPP. Terry Carter said that the state has programs to help seniors with energy audits.
- QQQ. Jason Rasmussen said you can help make people aware of these programs.
- RRR. Rose Goings said we require energy certificates with new construction or renovations. People have to use energy efficient equipment.
- SSS. Jason Rasmussen asked if there are any town owned buildings that use wood chips.
- TTT. Rose Goings said Black River Overlook is using them.
- UUU. Jason Rasmussen asked how we can encourage public transit.
- VVV. Rose Goings said there is a new taxi in town.
- WWW. Jason Rasmussen added that there is also the municipal transit system. We need to make people aware of the services that are available.
- XXX. Jason Rasmussen asked how they can get people to drive less. He suggested having a charging station for electric vehicles.
- YYY. Logan Nicoll and Terry Carter agreed.
- ZZZ. Jason Rasmussen said that they need to ask if the town plan facilitates walking or biking.
- AAAA. Logan Nicoll said the bike path project got lost.
- BBBB. Alan Isaacson said to encourage biking they need to make the roads ride-able with less potholes and better maintenance.
- CCCC. Jason Rasmussen said there is also a footpath option. He asked about Land Use patterns.
- DDDD. Alan Isaacson said that is covered on the zoning regulations.
- EEEE. Terry Carter said we encourage development in the village.
- FFFF. Jason Rasmussen said he would write up a draft with what they have discussed for the next meeting.

6. MUNICIPAL PLAN

- A. Alan Isaacson said that he read the copies of the other town plans that Jason Rasmussen sent. He added that no other plan does 10 to 20 year plans. He liked the Tinmouth plan.
- B. Terry Carter said she like Winhall and not Windsor.

- C. Alan Isaacson said of Burke, Stowe, Tinmouth and Winhall he likes Tinmouth. It does not have too many words and the vision is pretty obvious. He said it looks to 5 years and subsequent periods. He said that Stowe's plan is concise and matches Ludlow's needs. Stowe is also a resort town as well as a place where people live. Winhall falls into a similar situation. He said that Burke also has a vision similar to Ludlow's. He said that Stowe's is the best for projecting vision.
- D. Jason Rasmussen asked how they want to go about creating a vision for Ludlow. Do they want to reach out to people?
- E. Alan Isaacson said leaving it open can be disastrous.
- F. Terry Carter said they can invite people to their next meeting.
- G. Logan Nicoll said they had talked about a study or a survey.
- H. Rose Goings said there is not enough time for a survey; we need to be done by November.
- I. Alan Isaacson said he thought they had until March.
- J. Jason Rasmussen said the town plan expires in November.
- K. Rose Goings said we have \$3,000 to work with Jason Rasmussen and have to readopt the town plan by November. We won't be able to get through revising the entire plan.
- L. Alan Isaacson said that means we need to have our public hearing, then go to the Select Board by September and they will have to hold their public hearing by October.
- M. Rose Goings said after we re-adopt the town plan in November, we have 8 years to do a comprehensive rework of the plan. We will have to get grants and put money in the budgets for work on the plan. We have a budget from Jason Rasmussen of \$12,500 for a comprehensive update. We have \$3000 for now to cover re-adoption.
- N. Alan Isaacson asked what would be included in the \$3,000.
- O. Jason Rasmussen said new requirements for readoption, public outreach and data.
- P. Alan Isaacson asked Jason Rasmussen if he will update the data. He asked what public outreach is.
- Q. Jason Rasmussen said the easiest way is inviting people to meetings.
- R. Rose Goings said she will put an ad in the paper of record that the Planning Commission will be working on the Vision for the Town of Ludlow at their meeting and are requesting public input.
- S. Alan Isaacson said we need to work on the sections where the Trustees have problems with the wording.
- T. Logan Nicoll noted that there is a new trustee now.
- U. Rose Goings said she will invite the public as well as town boards.
- V. Alan Isaacson asked if this would be at the June meeting or after.
- W. Rose Goings suggested the May meeting.
- X. Jason Rasmussen said he would prefer to concentrate on the Energy Section at the May meeting, and then do the public meeting in June.
- Y. Alan Isaacson suggested sending the Tinmouth, Winhall and Stowe documents to anyone requesting them.
- Z. Jason Rasmussen said they have short, concise requirements.
- AA. Logan Nicoll said we need to keep our plan concise, but with more real content. We need to get the general requirements out of the way in as few sentences as possible.
- BB. Alan Isaacson said that the document should be a plan, not a history. We will concentrate on the Energy Chapter at the May meeting and the Vision at the June meeting.
- CC. Rose Goings said she would put the Energy Section on the agenda for the next meeting.

7. **RANGER SOLAR STATUS**

- A. Rose Goings advised that the project had been approved by the PSB.
- B. Alan Isaacson said there was an article in THE VERMONT JOURNAL that said the contracts to sell power to Connecticut had not been signed.
- C. Rose Goings said she does not know if that's true, but they do have their permit from the PSB.
- D. Alan Isaacson said the article also said this is the biggest project in the state. He voiced concern that there is only so much capacity on the grid and this project may crowd out other projects on the grid.
- E. Logan Nicoll advised that the TDI project will pay for upgrades to the substation. Ranger Solar is 20 MW hours and the TDI project is 1000 MW hours and the upgrades necessary for that project will not cause issues to the Ranger Solar project. He added that the TDI project is hydropower and it will be more or less on demand, used as needed. He has not heard that power crowding will be an issue. The TDI upgrades will give the substation more capacity than it will need for years.

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. VTRANS Walker Bridge Project Public Meeting
 - i. Alan Couch advised that VTRANS will be holding a public meeting regarding the Walker Bridge and Branch Brook projects on Thursday, April 20th at 7:00 p.m. at town hall.
- B. Next meeting
 - i. Next regular meeting is on May 16, 2017.
 - ii. Rose Goings advised that the Energy Section will be on the agenda, as well as Planning Commission re-organization.

9. **ADJOURN**

- A. **MOTION by Alan Isaacson and seconded by Logan Nicoll to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Alan Couch, Chairman

Logan Nicoll

Terry Carter

Norman Vanasse

Alan Isaacson