

**HYDE PARK
TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 20, 2017**

All minutes are draft until approved; please check future minutes for approval of these minutes.

Members Present: Bob Malbon, Vice-Chair; Vicki Emerson; Eric Williams

Members Absent: One vacancy; Greg Paus, Chairman

Staff: Ron Rodjenski

Guests: Zac Cota-Weaver, PC Candidate; Meghan Rodier & Lea Kilvadyova, LCPC Staff

Bob called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M.

- 1) **Welcome, Modifications to Agenda and Public Comment.** Bob welcomed Zac to the meeting. No changes to the agenda were made and no public comment was received.
- 2) **North Hyde Park Village Center (VC):** Meghan Rodier & Lea Kilvadyova, LCPC Staff - LCPC prepared a draft VC boundary map. The map shows two possible VC areas. A small area at the intersection of VT100 and Ferry Street was noted by ACCD to meet the statutory definition of Village Center and be eligible for the Village Center Designation Program. The commissioners initially suggested a boundary enclosing a much larger area, starting at VT100C and extending northerly to the fire station and easterly along Heath Road, which would benefit more landowners. A site visit with Richard Amore from ACCD is planned for March 20th - 4:00 p.m., meet at Grange Hall.
- 3) **Better Connections Grant** – No update, awards possible tomorrow and LCPC will notify the town and village on this joint transportation planning project.
- 4) **Enhanced Energy Plan (“EEP”)** – Under new state rules (Act 174), a local enhanced energy plan is required for the municipality to gain “substantial deference” in a state Certificate of Public Good approval process for all renewable energy projects, including wind and solar projects. Meghan handed out the mapping standards that towns need to follow and to be included in the municipal plan; including identification of locally preferred sites for energy projects and unsuitable sites, such as, within the Green River Reservoir Scenic Overlay. A list of local constraints for Hyde Park were provided as an example. The identification and mapping of both preferred and unsuitable would be expected to satisfy the new PSB standards. The State has provided guidance, available at the regional planning office or state PSB website. The Vermont Community Energy Dashboard website is a good source for data. Zac noted that viewsheds are important but difficult to defend in court without clear community standards. Eric noted that once we select areas that are unsuitable, then the reason why also needs to be established. Meghan noted that the State expects towns to identify both, preferred and unsuitable, based on sound reasoning. Limited commercial wind sites are available on the draft map with substantially more locations for solar. The goal of the local plan revisions will be to support the State energy goal of 90% renewable statewide by 2050. Eric left the meeting due to a family emergency. Lea noted that the standards are new last Fall and it can be a moving target as the State revises its process, goals and standards. The Commission will review both the solar and wind maps again in March and Meghan will email a digital copy to Ron to share with the Commissioners. Lea noted that a draft enhanced energy plan could be completed by this June and regional planning has funding support and community input could be done through a town meeting survey. The Dashboard shows Hyde Park generating 3.5 MW of renewable, which includes the two hydropower plants (MWL and the Power Plant Road site) and Hyde Park Solar Waterhouse. This amount compares to about 0.5 MW in Johnson. The State has not clarified the specific goal for Hyde Park, but Lea estimated it would be 14 MW. Vicki noted that the commission hopes to finish the municipal plan revisions by this Fall and the EEP process may fit nicely within that timeframe. Bennington County Planning Commission website has an example of a potential EEP template to start drafting one for Hyde Park. Bob asked about any pushback from utilities on the “90 by 50” state energy goal and Lea noted that the utilities have cautioned state planners on the need to locate large solar near existing 3-phase lines and consideration needs to be given to the capacity on the existing grid.
- 5) **150 kW Solar Plant at Locke Avenue** – Solar and Zoning Section 10.1 discussion deferred to March.
- 6) **2017 Zoning Amendments Update** – Discussion deferred to March.
- 7) **Proposed 2017 Municipal Plan** – Ron handed out the first 48 pages of a final draft, incorporating the prior commission comments with more discussion at the March meeting.
- 8) **Other Business** – None.
- 9) **Minutes** – January 2017 minutes; deferred to March.
- 10) **Adjourn** – No further discussion and the Commission adjourned at 7:07 p.m.