

Sharon Energy Committee Meeting

Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 5:15 PM

Sharon Town Office

2018-01-22 17:15

**DRAFT Minutes**

Energy Committee Members attending: Ryan Haac, Dee Gish, Jill Wilcox

Visitors attending: Ira Clark

Ryan called the meeting together at 17:23 (5:23 PM).

1. **Public comment period**

No comments

2. **Approve prior meeting minutes**

December 2017 meeting approved (2017-01-22 17:15)

3. **New England Grassroots Fund survey grant implementation**

The grant we received from NEGEF to perform a survey an energy survey in Sharon is approved and will be implemented accordingly. Ryan and Dee will develop a draft set of questions prior to the next meeting. Also, we will consider using grant funds to hire a temporary employee through the town to perform some of the tasks for survey implementation (printing, distribution, tabulation, etc.).

4. **Renewable Energy Sources for Municipalities**

Dee will look into the opportunities available for municipal energy sources in order to help formulate a general recommendation for the Town.

5. **Continue Enhanced Energy Planning Discussion**

The materials provided by Chris Damiani at TRORC were reviewed (Chris was unable to attend the meeting). Chris provided maps, a basic Enhanced Energy Chapter outline, and general guidance documents.

It became clear that we need an electronic means of sharing planning documents: Ryan will set up an open internet-based platform and share this directory as soon as it exists.

We reviewed the maps generated by Chris at TRORC. Since our last meeting, additional constraints/layers were added in reference to waterways and flood hazard zones. We determined that we needed information on the geographical area contributed by each map layer (constrained areas, wetland areas, prime solar areas, etc.).

We also reviewed the proposed Future Land Use Map, which expands the Forest Conservation districts considerably. To clarify the proposed Future Land Use Map, Ira shared a set of maps created by Kevin Geiger of TRORC. The maps identified almost all of Sharon as an important wildlife corridor, due to our favorable natural resources and geography. Most of Sharon was identified as a Priority or High Priority Forest/Habitat

Conservation region. These maps have helped inform the updated Town Plan (notably Chapter 14: Land Use) language and policies and are currently in draft form. The language of Chapter 14, which will be potentially adopted in the coming weeks or months, is yet to be reviewed in the context of Act 174. This chapter includes some language and policies that are applicable to Enhanced Energy Planning. Since it is currently being revised, we will wait until the section is defined to pursue its commitments.

We discussed that Norwich Technology's Rt. 132 project will be built in a location that is not currently identified as a primary solar site. As such, Ryan wondered if we were under-representing potential sites at this stage in the process: if we are unable to identify enough prime sites in this process, do we expand the insolation evaluation? Also, Sharon residents could potentially bring suitable areas to our attention during the planning process.

Ryan identified several regions described in the Town Plan that could be relevant to energy planning and could be relevant to mapping constraint layers:

### **Chapter 10 – Scenic Resources**

- Twelve qualitatively described scenic areas: we will need to determine how they are treated in the Enhanced Energy Plan.
- General ridgeline protection from all types of development (seven ridges named): ridgeline development of any kind is discouraged as a policy in the Town Plan (p. 47).
- “Ridgeline” is not quantifiably defined.

### **Chapter 11 – Natural Resources**

- Habitat protection prohibits fragmentation. This is not a constraint per se but is a prudent existing policy that could be incorporated into the mapping.

### **Chapter 12 – Historic and Archaeological**

- Village District and Day's Farm: both appear to be quantitatively defined and should be added as defined constraints in the mapping. Norwich Technologies may be updating the surveying of Day's Farm per conditions of a recently permitted project.

### **Chapter 14 – Land Use (not evaluated, currently being drafted)**

### **Chapter 16 – Energy**

- Permitting consideration (Section E): Preferred locations, prohibited locations, significant areas (p. 100)
- “Significant Areas” include: historic, prime agricultural soil, public parks and recreation, designated scenic roads and viewsheds, special flood hazards, public water and private water supplies, “necessary wildlife habitat” (state identified), wildlife core habitat areas, wildlife migration and travel corridors.

## **6. Other Business**

Town Meeting breakfast planning needs to begin. Ryan will inquire with Nicole about prospects for this year, as she has typically been our capable leader in this endeavor.

## **7. Next scheduled meeting:** Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (2018-02-05 17:15)

Ryan adjourned the meeting at 18:29 (6:29 PM).