

Sharon Energy Committee Meeting
Monday, February 26th, 2018 @ 05:15 PM

Sharon Town Office
2018-02-26 17:15

DRAFT Minutes

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

Visitors attending: Chris Damiana (TRORC)

Ryan called the meeting together at 17:20 (5:20 PM).

1. **Public comment period**

No comments

2. **Approve prior meeting minutes**

Minutes from prior February 2018 meeting approved (2018-02-05 17:15)

3. **Town Meeting Breakfast**

Nicole has everything under control!

4. **Town Meeting ballot item: 350Vermont.org Resolution**

The resolution is on the Town Meeting ballot this year. Ryan and Jill will be attending training on strategies and procedures.

5. **Vermont Climate Action Communities - meeting debrief**

Ryan and Dee attended the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) meeting in Montpelier on February 15, 2018. The presenters urged Vermont towns to become part of the Vermont Climate Pledge Coalition. The Community Energy Dashboard was presented as a tool to track and promote programs, campaigns, and actions across the state and also as a way to share successes and experiences amongst towns. Representatives from four Vermont towns (including Hartford) presented examples of successful energy (and cost) saving initiatives in their towns.

6. **Sharon Energy Survey**

We discussed the current version of the survey that Ryan had drafted. All present provided feedback and we clarified some questions and answers. Ryan will perform the revisions and ensure that the final version of the survey shows up at Town Meeting.

7. **Continue Enhanced Energy Planning Discussion with Chris Damiani of TRORC**

At the previous meeting, Ryan identified several regions described in the Town Plan that are relevant to energy planning and could be helpful to include on the map as constraint layers:

- We discussed that the specific Scenic Resources of Chapter 10 in the Town Plan could be labeled on the map but that defining boundaries was impractical.
- Habitat protection from Chapter 11 of the Town Plan is not a constraint per se but is prudent existing policy that could be incorporated when we assess each specific area resource.
- “Prohibited Locations” from the Town Plan’s existing Energy Chapter are already included in existing constraint layers.
- Ridgeline development of any kind is discouraged as a policy in the Town Plan. Further, a goal for the Town Plan is to define them (p. 47). Chris could apply a ridgeline definition to eliminate areas that the Town Plan considers unsuitable for development. Dee noted that other RPCs in the state have used an elevation cutoff to define a ridgeline. Ryan pointed out that Sharon’s varied elevations may not permit that simple solution. Jill noted that elevations in the northeastern part of Town were similar to some ridgeline near the White River. Finally, Chris suggested combining elevation with either: distance below a peak or the slope leading up to it. We agreed to explore the concept individually and bring any ideas back to the group.
- Ryan volunteered to track down the definitions (surveys?) of the historical districts so that they could be added as constraints.
- Chris indicated that a rough target for the town is around 70 acres of land for solar; there are currently about 700 acres identified as “Prime” solar-endowed land.

At the next meeting, we plan to interactively explore the mapping resources that Chris will have available. We will look at several regions in Town with concentrated areas of solar resources to determine if the specific sites are practical and/or feasible. The tools we hope to have available are a collection of resource and constraint map layers, aerial and topographic imagery, and any local knowledge that is present at the meeting. We are essentially trying to determine if some of the currently identified resources are reasonable to include in the calculation of suitable area for renewable energy generation.

8. Other Business

Dee recently applied for the VNRC Small Grant for Smart Growth Program to install a community message board at the Sharon Park and Ride. The message board would contain Sharon resources related to public transportation, bike maps, nearby public hiking routes, area restaurants, etc.

9. Next scheduled meeting: Monday, March 26th, 2018 (2018-03-26 17:15)

Ryan adjourned the meeting at 18:20 (6:20 PM).