

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of October 15, 2018**

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chair Hill-Eubanks.

- I. **Roll Call:** Present for the meeting were Brown, Goodrich, Rhodes, Ruttenberg, and Hill-Eubanks. Also attending were Brandy Saxton, planner from PlaceSense; Jonathan Spencer and Gail Hall.
- II. **Set/Adjust Agenda:** Review Flood Resilience and Energy chapters.
- III. **Public Participation:** Jonathan Spencer, Coalition for the Preservation and Protection of Northfield's Cheney Field; Gail Hall, Northfield's Energy Future.
- IV. **Town Plan Update:** Meet with planner.
 - a. **Review chapter 1st drafts**
 - i. **Flood Resilience:** discussion of information and policies in the Flood Resilience chapter. Differences between setback and riparian buffer should be clear in the Plan. Setbacks of 50 ft. from stream riverbanks to development will be necessary to receive full Emergency Relief reimbursement after flood damages in town. Riparian buffers (vegetation) within the setback area will be encouraged to add protections for the river corridor and mitigation of flood hazards.

Look at town stormwater studies and sort out projects that have been completed, are in process, or should be recommended for priority. Information on Water St. Park and its flood storage capacity should be included in a sidebar; contact Friends of Winooski for information.
 - ii. **Energy:** If PC and town want certification of the energy chapter for Substantial Deference at the state permitting level, the energy chapter will need policies added that conform to the criteria in the state checklist. Transportation policies in particular will have to be added.

Electricity usage data/information for the Plan is good quality, but transportation and heating data is difficult to collect.

On the energy resource maps: Infrastructure (for connection to grid) and potential resource are important; distance to electric infrastructure was not considered in the original state/regional maps. Should also add the natural resource constraint definitions. For preferred RE siting, could narrow RE land use to places that may be viable and then ask landowners whether they would consider projects (who would be responsible for this?). To meet state energy goals, would need 200-300 total acres of land in town for RE. Should we restrict large RE projects so they are not allowed on land in commercial/industrial districts, or in areas where sewer and water are in place to allow for commercial/residential development (RE may not be highest and best use in these areas)?

Ask Northfield Electric for its data/information. Document municipal energy use (transportation and buildings included). Should ask Norwich U whether they have plans for renewable energy development (RE); PC asked Goodrich to work with Norwich on that.

Next steps: look at energy checklist for certification and decide which policies would need most public input. Decide whether local Preferred Sites should be added and if so: added as specific land parcels, or as a description of the types of areas generally (such as abandoned fields).

- b. Future work plan:** Draft of Land Use and Economic Development chapters will be sent to PC soon; Transportation and Housing chapters have been received. PC will review draft chapters as they are received, send them to appropriate town departments, commissions, and/or groups for relevant information and input. First draft could be completed in January. PC and planner will edit the chapters, and then send them out for public input. Community public meetings will take place as public input is sought, possibly in February. PC workshop to review draft and finalize for adoption process thereafter.

V. Approval of Minutes: September 17, 2018. Tabled.

VI. Other Business:

VII. Next Regular Meeting: November 19, 2018.

VIII. Adjournment: Goodrich left the meeting at 9:05 PM. Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

These minutes are subject to changes and approval at the next regular meeting, but are substantially correct.