

RUTLAND TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, March 23, 2017
7:00 P.M.
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL OFFICE

Present: Ms. Barbara Pulling, Mr. Dana Peterson, Mr. Fred Nicholson, Mr. Howard Burgess, Mr. Norman Cohen, Mr. Jerry Stearns, (Mr. Andrew McKane via Phone).

- Meeting called to order by Ms. Pulling at 7:20 P.M.

Approval of Agenda:

- Mr. Cohen moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes March 2, 2017:

- Mr. Peterson moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Nicholson seconded the motion. After discussion and minor amendments Mr. Peterson amended his motion to accept the minutes with amendments. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment/Questions:

- There was no public comment.

New Business:

- Ms. Pulling informed the Commission the Otter Creek Solar Projects One and Two site visit were postponed because of the snowstorm. Ms. Pulling stated a public hearing was held and there was a presentation from Mr. Brad Wilson from Ecos Solar.

Old Business:

Act 174 Renewable Energy Plan REP):

- Ms. Pulling presented the Commission with region wide maps regarding the REP. Ms. Pulling stated the maps will not be what will be turned over to the Town. Ms. Pulling said the new maps will have parcels, structures, current use lands and forest lands.
- Ms. Pulling explained the colors on the maps and what they represent.
- Ms. Pulling said there are some areas on the map that may require mitigation and pointed out the list of constraints known or possible at the bottom of the map.
- Ms. Pulling pointed out the one mile buffers on the maps regarding three phase power.
- The Commission discussed areas of potential for solar projects and areas that will have constraints.
- Ms. Pulling read the known constraints which are the same for solar, wind, hydro and biomass.
- Ms. Pulling asked Mr. Nicholson his thoughts regarding the group decision of putting structures on the maps. Mr. Nicholson said he understood the theory of looking at rooftop solar projects in the southern part of town but wasn't sure that be determined from a map. Mr. Cohen said he was of the understanding that most structures in our area can't support rooftop solar projects. Ms. Pulling cited the capacity factors and what could be substituted for a REP. Mr. Burgess said that homes should not be considered as they are private property and he doesn't think homeowners will be willing to participate.
- Mr. Cohen asked Ms. Pulling about her comment at the past Rutland Town Planning Commission meeting that the Rutland County Planning Commission (RRPC) Renewable Energy Committee "decided not to put industrial wind projects into the plan and substitute with smaller scale wind projects". Ms. Pulling stated the Town can't take wind totally out of the plan and it has to be considered. Ms. Pulling said if the Commission decided on a larger scale wind project the committee would consider it.
- Mr. Cohen cited the View Shed portion of the Natural Resources section of the Town Plan and expressed concern how the Commission can integrate the conditions of the REP into the Town Plan. Mr. Burgess stated he didn't think the State knew what the Commission was thinking when creating the Town Plan. Ms. Pulling said the State is coming out with new information to assist Towns with creating their own REP. Mr. Peterson suggested the Commission visit potential sites and consider how the View Sheds may be affected.

- Mr. Cohen cited Ms. Pulling's comment at the last meeting that the REP considers the target list with "what is already out there". The Commission discussed the numbers sent from the State which are not accurate. Mr. Peterson read from the list provided by the State to assure Mr. Cohen that it does. Ms. Pulling stated she will be providing the Commission with correct numbers. Ms. Pulling and Mr. Peterson told Mr. Cohen that the existing projects the Town has will be considered with the target goal.
- The Commission discussed the ratio of Town land and the development of various projects to satisfy the REP.
- Mr. Cohen suggested the Commission look at the Town Plan and consider adding energy siting standards. Mr. Nicholson said you can't separate out a particular project as it is discriminatory.
- Ms. Pulling stated the Commission has a lot of time, the plan will be done in stages and the Commission could consider other forms of energy other than solar.
- Ms. Pulling stated the RRPC is still deciding how to divide the land among the towns regarding the regional target for the REP.
- Mr. Peterson motioned to adjourn. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

