

**I - Call to Order**

PC Members attending- Dennis Casey, Chair, Jeff Keeney, Hugh Johnson, and Dan Harris

Others present- Richard (Digger) Fasey, Caleb Elder, Dave Wetmore

7:00 PM –Dennis called the PC meeting to order. Dave took minutes.

**II- Minutes**

3/16/2017 minutes review- Quorum not present review next meeting

**III- Visitors Business and Adjustments to agenda**

No visitors

**IV- PC Business**

**Renewable energy discussion- Digger Fasey and Caleb Elder**

Caleb is the Starksboro Energy coordinator, Digger has participated on energy committees in the past. Both are here to discuss how they can assist the PC with the Town Plan as it relates specifically to Act 174. Digger expressed that this is a good opportunity to bring the community together.

Caleb- expressed that he is pretty stretched out and will not be able to offer much time. Presently there is not an established energy committee to draw upon. An energy committee would need to be formed by the Selectboard. Caleb described Act 174 as multi-faceted whose rules were developed by the VT Department of Public Service. The rules seek to reinforce the 90% by 2050 renewable energy goal and give towns new standing “substantial deference” (Sd) in reviews before the Public Service Board. The difference is that Sd would allow towns to site renewables in appropriate locations. Caleb expressed that he hoped that Starksboro would try to craft an open policy to allow for renewable energy development in specified areas of Town. If a committee is appointed he would hope that would be their focus.

Dan Harris- asked if the 90% goal is a policy. Caleb stated that it is a broad objective. The rules of 174 specifically outline proposed targets by county. Addison County has 6% of the population and the renewable energy goal is 10% solar and 11% wind, for a total of 14 mW of renewable power. This would require approximately 20 ridge line type wind turbines and between 100-200 acres of solar. Caleb felt that renewable power generation would likely be distributed which would require significant infrastructure upgrades.

Digger- explained that we have wind resources to support wind generation. Dan asked if we are better suited for wind? Caleb and Digger stated we have both. Caleb felt it was all about siting of these projects. Dave agreed that it is about siting and screening.

Caleb- net-metering projects are between 1-500kW. The large net metered projects are going to be very difficult to permit under Act 174, excepting brownfields and gravel pits. The focus will be on the 12-50 kW projects, especially roof top arrays.

Caleb- spoke about energy efficiency, heating being a big consumer of energy. This is an area that an energy committee/work group or Conservation Committee could work to improve and have a big impact.

PC- relayed Nirmegh's comments about the down side to renewables. Nirmegh had spoke about lack of recycling opportunities, oxidized aluminum and silicate residue in the soil. Caleb responded that he felt renewables seem to be held to higher standard because the impacts are more distributed. The reality is nothing is perfect. In this case all industrial power projects need to be carefully considered. Most solar projects are not anchored to concrete. Silica is relatively benign, the other materials in a panel are aluminum and glass. There are requirements for decommission funding for these solar arrays, which is a good thing. Caleb reminded the PC that he does not want to take the lead assisting the PC. Dave suggested that getting the Selectboard to appoint a committee would take time. Perhaps the PC could establish a group of diverse people who are willing to work closely with the PC on this section.

Jeff asked about hydro? Caleb is not familiar with that technology.

PC- What are the chances that the Town would be held responsible for our share of the 90% by 2050 goal? Caleb expressed that it would be hard to believe that each town would be held accountable. He did state that solar is beating oil and that folks would benefit from developing small scale net-metering projects to address their own needs. Act 174 provides some good protection for communities, a little effort and the Town Plan could address and protect the Town from unwanted siting of renewable projects.

PC- asked Dave to look into whether or not the PC could form a working group to address the renewable energy piece.

**Review March 27 UVM presentation-**

PC reviewed points/comments by students. 2011 Plan complies with Act 171, however more emphasis could be put on use of building envelopes, and better understanding of the terms used in the Plan. Use of definitions and diagrams would be useful. UVM team used Waitsfield's Plan as an example.

Jeff- felt that it was unnecessary to define every term in the Plan, and that if the 2011 Plan was compliant we don't need to do anymore.

Dennis- shared that even the Students admitted that there are many definitions for terms like "core forests". Which do you choose in that case? Dennis also cited that the Plan needs to address the need for a class 4 road policy. All understand that roads are the responsibility of the Selectboard and the zoning regulations are quite restrictive of development on class 4 roads. Dennis shared with the Students the pie chart showing how much of the Town is restricted from development, i.e. ASSR and FC districts.

Dave- expressed that rather than creating more policies and objectives (many of which are not obtainable) the CC needs to work to develop achievable objectives and policies for the Plan.

**Lewis Creek presentation-**

Dennis and Jeff shared that Lewis Creek association (LCA) is seeking to re-classify the headwater areas of the Lewis Creek. LCA shared a map showing 5 areas to reclassify. This is a significant area of Starksboro. Jeff felt this just means that these headwater areas will be further restricted from any land development. Jeff asked what is the reclassification process? What are the benefits? Dave will try to find out. Dennis asked LCA about the erosion taking place south of Russell Farm on Mitch Kelly's property. This was started by a downed tree and no one seems to be concerned about this. PC discussed water quality and stormwater mgt. provisions in Starksboro Zoning.

**Community Survey-** Dave shared that Brandy had reported that 50+ people have taken the survey on line and that there are 3 drop boxes around town. Early responses seem better than previous surveys. Dave will put another announcement on FPF on Monday. Surveys are due back April 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Public participation and input-** Dennis shared that the Selectboard has discussed how to do a better job getting information to residents. Since the PC is working on the Town Plan this is a timely subject and concern and the SB wants to avoid the conflicts that took place with the Bylaws. How can we do a better job of keeping the public informed? Should we use FPF more? Joint meetings? Dave shared that he is open to any suggestions. He is reluctant to post agendas on FPF. Agendas and minutes are always posted to the website as required by law. Dave has used the Gazette each month this year thus far. Each month he has spoken of the community survey and it was in the Town Report. PC needs to discuss with Brandy what other activities need to be done to get the Town Plan updated. Residents have to ultimately be responsible to find out what's going on. PC suggests that the SB would like to know about the Town Plans progress and process.

**Historical Society-** Dave has not received any correspondence from Elsa related to Town Plan updates.

**Library-** Jeff reported that they would like to submit a re-write of the community assessment piece related to the Library.

**V- Other**

April 20, 2017- Mary Jackman, ACCT will be here for a general discussion about the mobile home parks in Town.

**VI- Adjournment**

Hugh moved to adjourn at 9:35 PM, Jeff 2nds. Motion to adjourn 4- yes, 0-no.