

**Brandon Energy Committee Meeting
January 7, 2018**

Committee Members Present: Michael Shank, Jack Schneider, Edna Sutton

Committee Members Absent: Lowell Rasmussen

Also in Attendance: Barbara Noyes-Pulling, Stephanie Jerome

1. Call to order

Michael Shank, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:03PM.

2. Agenda Approval

A motion was made by Edna Sutton to approve the agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Approval of Minutes

October 1, 2018 Meeting:

A motion was made by Jack Schneider to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2018 Energy Committee meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Finalize Planning for January 12th Workshop on Zero Energy Homes and Tesla Experience

Michael Shank reported the Energy Committee's workshop is scheduled for this Saturday and all 14 slots are filled for the Tesla Experience that will be held from 10AM to 5PM. Mr. Shank will assist Tesla with the set up for this event. From 1PM to 2:30PM in the upstairs of the Town Hall, Matt Sharp from Efficiency Vermont will be doing a Cold Climate/Heat Pump workshop that will include a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Shank has provided information to Bill Moore for posting on the Town's website and Facebook page. Mr. Shank has posted the event on Front Porch Forum and will follow-up with another posting prior to the event. Stephanie Jerome suggested posting the workshops on the Events Calendar of The Reporter and Addison Independent. Barbara Noyes-Pulling suggested providing a future workshop with lower cost options. Mr. Shank advised that Grass Roots Solar had contacted him with regard to participation in a workshop and Mr. Shank suggested a local installer fair could be scheduled sometime in the future.

5. Update on Preferred Renewable Energy Sites

Michael Shank reported he has received several calls from people interested in participating as a preferred renewable energy site. Mr. Shank noted the three largest areas include a 65-acre property on Kimball Road, a 35-acre property on Route 7 and a 70-acre property on Route 53 west of Forestdale. Mr. Shank will view the locations and will advise the Committee. He noted these are the largest parcels, but he has also received calls regarding smaller parcels.

Mr. Shank questioned how the Preferred Renewable Energy map is updated and Barbara Noyes-Pulling provided information on how the Town of Sudbury outlined the information on their renewable energy preferred sites that included a listing and a color-coded map. Ms. Noyes-Pulling suggested using the RRPC's GIS program. Mr. Shank will contact the RRPC once the Committee has received all information on the preferred sites. Ms. Pulling asked if there is extra space in the Industrial Park and Ms. Jerome suggested contacting the Brandon Industrial Board. It was also suggested to inquiry about land near the transfer station, as Rutland Town used the encapsulated landfill for a project. Mr. Shank will place one more advertisement on Front Porch forum, collect parcel IDs and provide the information to Ms. Noyes-

Pulling. Edna Sutton suggested contacting the school district to discuss the possibility of schools being used as preferred locations for energy projects. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised the Town has 3414 megawatt hours with 100 sites and noted the Town's goal for 2050 is 14000 megawatt hours. The Town has exceeded the 2025 goal based on the dashboard. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised the State is very focused on the 2050 goal. Mr. Shank questioned whether the Town's 2025 goal should be adjusted and Ms. Noyes-Pulling recommended leaving the goals outlined by the State. She noted that overall, the State is not on track and they may come back with some higher requirements. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised that Brandon has the electric infrastructure for projects to tie into.

Michael Shank suggested forwarding the language to the Planning Commission for their review. Barbara Noyes-Pulling stated the unsuitable and scenic resources need to be reviewed. At the very least, the unsuitable areas are a "no-go" and local constraints are "maybe" areas. The scenic resources are noted as unsuitable; however, there is not a list of the resources. Ms. Noyes-Pulling stated unsuitable areas would be conservation lands that have deeds and sometimes use value lands such as agriculture and forestlands. She noted those areas are cut and dry in this context, but there is a local constraint category that should always be discussed. Mr. Shank suggested the Committee make a recommendation to the Select Board to have a conversation with an outside source to assist in this area or make a determination of what the unsuitable areas are. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised the Plan would have to include a map of these areas as well. Mr. Shank suggested pulling the language relating to this subject and indicate the Town will quantify later. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised the scenic view sheds could be noted with developers required to do the research for proposed projects. It was noted the scenic resources also need to be mapped. Stephanie Jerome noted certain areas in Town are taxed differently for scenic views and the Zoning Administrator should have this information. Mr. Shank requested Ms. Noyes-Pulling highlight what needs to be pulled from the document until there is additional information to enable the Plan to be moved forward. Ms. Noyes-Pulling noted the use values need to be obtained from the property owners. Mr. Shank will pull the unsuitable section and add the natural resources information from the current Town Plan. Ms. Noyes-Pulling will total the unsuitable lands and deduct it from the amount of acreage unusable for energy projects. Mr. Shank will also add verbiage to acknowledge the Town has met the target for 2025. Ms. Noyes-Pulling noted the two maps required will be the local preferred sites and the local constraints.

A motion was made by Michael Shank and seconded by Edna Sutton to forward the proposed Energy Plan to the Planning Commission, upon completion of above-mentioned updates. **The motion passed unanimously.**

7. Old/New Business

Stephanie Jerome noted that Jack Schneider has requested Representative Shaw and she potentially work with the PUC to allow a change to a standard offer, if towns have preferred energy sites. Ms. Jerome stated the PUC had approved the Conti project site, but it had not been approved by the Town and the PUC would not approve a proposed change in the site. Barbara Noyes-Pulling stated the standard offer gives preferred rates to developers and locks the rates in and she is not sure if it has a lot of give and take. There is no guarantee with towns' energy plans, as the PUC has the authority to approve projects, whether they are on preferred sites for the greater good of the State. It was noted that it is unfortunate the Conti Solar project could not be moved to another location, as the Town lost megawatts for their energy plan with the project unable to move to the proposed site.

Edna Sutton asked if there is anyone gathering information that has been learned. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised that Johanna Miller of the VSPC has an intern that has been working to collect this data. Ms. Noyes-Pulling noted there is also an annual conference held that provides a lot of swapping of information.

Barbara Noyes-Pulling advised the State does a comprehensive energy plan every five years and the towns have to do updates to their plans every 8 years.

8. Next Meeting

Monday, February 4, 2019 @ 5PM in the Brandon Town Office

9. Adjournment

The Committee Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:03PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary