

000398

TOWN OF WARREN
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MONDAY APRIL 22, 2013

Members Present: Craig Klofach, Lisa Miserendino, Mike Ketchel, Don LaHaye, Mike Bridgewater, Randy Graves and Dan Raddock.

Others Present: John and Patty McAllister, Jim Tabor, Susan Bauchner, Susan Hemmeter, Cherri Sherman, Jesse Stowell, David and Avril Howe, Jito Coleman, Greg andCarolynn Schipa, Emily Hebert, Greg Moffroid, Miron Malboeuf and Ruth Robbins.

Agenda: Call the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

1. Traffic Calming measures for Roxbury Mtn Rd TH-1 Roxbury Mtn Rd- Warren VT 280 FT East of intersection of TH 9, 2, and 1.
2. Discussion of Valley Reporter Editorial of April 11, 2013
3. Wind Energy--Continuing Discussion
4. Review & sign minutes from April 8th, 2013
5. Other & New business:

Mr. Klofach called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

Mr. Klofach began the meeting by welcoming the many members of the public in attendance. He asked for those in attendance to state their name and what their interest was in being here. In turn, the PC members all introduced themselves.

The first item on the agenda was a continuation of the PC's investigation into traffic patterns over the Roxbury Gap and down through the village. Previous traffic counts conducted by the CVRPC on behalf of the town have been inconclusive and the Commission is requesting that additional counts be done, possibly waiting until fall or attempting one during the Memorial Day weekend.

Mr. Klofach then asked his fellow PC members if there were any additional comments or thoughts regarding the Valley Reporter editorial of April 11th or the subsequent letters/articles appearing in the Valley Reporter of April 18th. Mr. Ketchel thanked Mr. Klofach for a well written letter in response to the editorial and Mr. Graves seconded that note of appreciation.

The Commission then moved on to a discussion they began at their last meeting regarding wind energy and whether or not they needed to modify the Town Plan and in turn the Land Use and Development Regulations on this subject. They began with a reading by Mr. Klofach of two letters that had been submitted to the Planning commission. The first was emailed to the PC Secretary on April 22nd by Mr. Messner. His letter spoke to the balance and careful consideration that needed to be taken by the PC in dealing with this subject. The other letter also emailed to the PC Secretary on April 22nd was from the owner of Sugarbush Resort, Win Smith. Mr. Smith stated "As a significant user of electricity, we at Sugarbush are most interested in this topic as well as in the preservation of the environmental aesthetics that make this Valley special."

After the reading of the letters Mr. Klofach spoke to the public about the process that the PC will take on making changes, if any, regarding wind energy. He assured them that nothing is done in haste and referenced the length of time they took in making some changes in the village. Ms. Miserendino also noted for the audience that the agendas were posted either the Thursday or Friday before the Monday meetings which were held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month.

The posting locations were the town's website, the Warren Post Office, Paradise Deli on the - Sugarbush Access Road and at the town Municipal building. Mr. Klofach once again welcomed them and expressed how pleased the PC was in seeing some community interest by their attendance.

As suggested at the last meeting, the PC started by looking at some wind maps showing where potential wind energy might be possible. Mr. Coleman who has some knowledge of wind energy spoke up and said that the mapping the PC was looking at was not entirely accurate. Mr. Stohl who works for AWS True Power who produces the information for the maps did tell the Commission that updated information was available. He also told the Commission that most any of the wind map information they come across will be model based, and that to get a true reading of potential wind supply it needs to be actually measured over a year or two. Mr. Coleman did say though that from a planning perspective that the maps were a good source of general information. He continued to say that it was remarkable how little wind there is in the valley and that the wind is driven by elevation making most desirable sites along the ridgelines. Mr. Coleman also suggested to the PC that they not reinvent the wheel and look to other community that have already done the groundwork in formulating wind energy policy in their town plans and zoning regulations. In response to a question about the potential of Lincoln Ridge for a wind energy source, Mr. Coleman shared that it was looked at in 1976 as a good resource but that there were three major stumbling blocks: no distribution ability, expensive construction costs and interference with an established hiking trail [the Long Trail] that made the possibility of harnessing wind energy at that location challenging.

A member of the audience suggested that the PC might want to look at community wind orchards in lieu of allowing smaller individual wind towers in folk's backyards. Another asked about the effect on the bat population and Mr. Coleman said that studies had been done that showed where regulations required a curtailment of operation of the mills during lower wind speed times that the negative effect on bat deaths was greatly diminished. He added that the utility contract structure was important in being able to turn the towers off and have some control. The discussion also brought up the pros/cons of wind energy versus solar energy with some comments indicating that they thought solar had a lesser impact on the topography and in particular the agricultural soils of a meadowland setting. One person noted that with technology changing as rapidly as it has that in two years time this discussion could be very different. Mr. Graves followed that comment with his statement that the PC has attempted to look at the big picture and plan out beyond the short term so as not to paint the town into a corner as things change. Mr. Ketchel let the audience know that the Town Plan was a "living document" that was required by statute to be reviewed and updated every five years.

The discussion on wind energy wound down and the PC thanked those who attended and told them that the discussion would continue. The members then reviewed and signed the minutes of the April 8th meeting. They agreed to continue the wind discussion at the next meeting with more of a focus on the individual zoning districts as they are characterized in the Town Plan. Mr. LaHaye reported that all towns of the CVRPC now had appointed representatives though he didn't have an accurate feel yet as to how all might vote on the proposed consolidation.

With no further business before the Commission the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth V. Robbins
DRB/PC Assistant

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Planning Commission

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Mike Ketchel 5/13/13
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Randy Graves 05/13/13
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Mike Bridgewater 5/13/13
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TOWN OF WARREN, VT
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TOWN CLERK

