

TOWN OF WARREN
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MONDAY JUNE 24, 2013

Members Present: Randy Graves, Jim Sanford, Mike Bridgewater, Craig Klofach, Mike Ketchel and Dan Raddock.

Others Present: George Schaefer, Bob Baron, Eric Brattstrom, Dotty Kyle, Greg & Carolynn Schipa, Miron Malboeuf and Ruth Robbins.

Agenda: Call meeting to order, 7:30 pm.

- 1) Opportunity For Public Comment (fifteen minutes) 7:30 - 7:45 pm
- 2) Working Session:
 - a) Examination of Documents Submitted to the Commission regarding Wind Energy
- 3) Review & sign minutes from June 10th, 2013
- 4) Other & New business:

Mr. Klofach called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

The first item on the agenda was a fifteen minute time slot for public comment. Mr. Klofach told those in attendance that though the Commission welcomed and wanted their comments and input that as a group they had not been able to spend any time discussing the issue(s) amongst themselves. They also told the audience that they were encouraged to remain for the rest of the meeting so that they could hear the discussion of the PC members. As it is expected that the topic of wind energy will be talked about over a period of many meetings there will be several opportunities for additional comment and input from the public on a regular basis.

Ms. Kyle, speaking on behalf of the Warren Energy Committee was recognized first. She said that the Energy Committee was very interested in the possible revisions the PC was discussing for the Town Plan regarding energy. Ms. Kyle then read a prepared statement that encouraged the PC to commit to advocating in the Town Plan an orderly movement towards the use of alternative/renewable energy sources versus fossil fuels. They also noted that though industrial scale wind projects may be inappropriate for Warren's ridgelines that smaller wind installations may be acceptable and should be allowed. The statement also asked for ongoing participation in the deliberations by the PC regarding future energy objectives in the Town Plan.

Other comments from those in attendance were regarding the procedure of how/when comments would be taken by the PC. They were reassured that the Commission did want to hear feedback/suggestions just that they needed to better manage their time and be able to make some progress on discussion within the PC about the comments made to date as well as their own research and materials. The PC also replied to the Energy Committee about their request for participation. They said that the Energy Committee as well as the Conservation Commission and any other groups with an interest would have ample opportunities to partake in the discussion.

With public comment over, the PC began their own discussion beginning with an attempt to come up with an understanding of size, scale and power output for categorizing small scale wind power equipment. The members were looking at various models of zoning language from other states knowing that they would be backtracking to the Town Plan before any zoning regulations could be

changed. There seemed to be no one simple model. For example a 100 kw wind tower could be anywhere from 50 to 115 feet high with the blade diameter 59 to 69 feet. Some considered a 60 kw unit small where others said 100 kw was also "small". Monopoles versus lattice were two different tower styles of which some might find one more aesthetically acceptable over another. The question was posed as to how many towers within a certain land space – is one 100 foot tower better than three 60 foot towers at one site? A lot would depend on the wind measurement for a specific location. The members moved towards considering defining wind towers more by its visual appearance than its power capability. They also indicated it would be helpful to be able to get a mock-up visual that showed what a wind tower of certain specifications might look like in various locations around town.

The PC members digressed briefly from their discussion about small scale wind towers and once again questioned just what the potential was for large scale wind production. To date, they have been told that the modeling shows limited possibilities along the eastern ridge of Warren and that the cost's associated with possible development of large scale wind on the western ridge, primarily US Forest land, would be prohibited if not at least challenging. It was pointed out that the proposal put forth in Waitsfield was for twelve towers running from Prickley Mountain to Moretown. It was not clear if all of the PC members were in agreement as to the potential [or not] for large scale wind in Warren.

They talked about how as technology changes they could also modify the Town Plan as at a minimum they have to update this document once every five years. Also mentioned was what a setback regulation might be – should the distance be from property lines or neighboring structures. Returning to the number of towers in a given area or parcel, they mentioned that there were projects where towers had been clustered not unlike solar gardens where several solar panels [or wind towers?] could serve a community, neighborhood or designated area of many homeowners. Again the members came back to the idea that they needed to concern themselves with the visual over the power output of the unit in their considerations.

The discussion then returned to the topic of the VT Public Service Board [PSB] who has the authority to grant permits for wind and solar energy installations. Though the Commission believes that with the appropriate language in the Town Plan the PSB will take the Town's wishes into consideration they discussed the possibility of having a representative of the PSB come to the PC to find out just what they will consider in making their decisions. Staff said they would look into getting someone from the PSB as soon as they could schedule it.

In other business the PC heard from Mr. Malboeuf about information he had received from Mr. Schwartz regarding a Transportation grant. Mr. Brattstrom of the Energy Committee recommended an e-book called "Clean Break" by Osha Davidson. The PC members reviewed and signed the minutes of June 10th.

Mr. Ketchel made a motion at 9:25pm to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a real estate matter and invited Mr. Malboeuf and Ms. Robbins to join them. Mr. Graves seconded and all voted in favor. The PC members came out of executive session at 9:40 pm and adjourned their meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth V. Robbins
DRB/PC Assistant

Planning Commission

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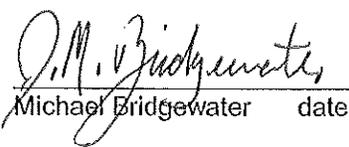
Dan Raddock

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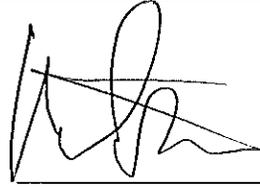
Craig Klofach

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Michael Bridgewater

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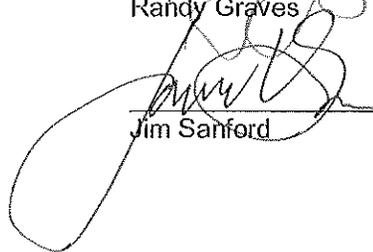
Mike Ketchel

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Randy Graves

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Jim Sanford

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