

Town of New Haven Planning Commission Special Meeting
Draft Minutes
Tuesday, November 9, 2020
Remote Meeting

This meeting was held remotely via GoToMeeting.

Planning Commission Members Present: Co-Chair Benj Putnam, Kathy Cahill, Bev Landon, Maggie Eaton, and Pat Palmer

Absent: Co-Chair Rob Litch

Staff: Zoning Administrator Aaron Brown

Visitors: Amanda Boddell, John Mazzuchi, and Steve Dupoise

A video recording of the meeting is available at

<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/1b3010e7c5e8880d0a5a406ce75814b1dd1b5cf0da4e6989ef01b6be8a96208f>.

- I. Call to Order 7:05 PM
 1. Adjustments to Agenda

No adjustments to the agenda were made.

2. Visitors' Business

Visitors introduced themselves.

- II. ZA Update

The building season is coming to a close. The DRB has two minor subdivision applications to review and an additional subdivision application is likely to come in.

- III. Energy Plan

Benj Putnam reminded the group that its main task for the evening is to review the draft energy plan to be included in the town plan. He invited Maggie Eaton to provide an introduction.

Eaton provided a reminder of some questions from the prior meeting. One was whether a parcel map overlay could be transposed onto the energy resources map. The current answer is probably not. Eaton said Steve Dupoise had previously inquired about wind turbine noise levels. Research showed that the state has decibel standards in its regulations.

Eaton and Dupoise met with VELCO representatives to seek clarification about energy use at the proposed back-up facility. Eaton had overestimated the potential energy use of the facility. However, it

could still increase energy use in New Haven by as much as 23% should the facility be at full operation. The figure is important because each town is responsible for meeting energy use and reduction goals.

Dupoise added that Pam Marsh suggested the energy use at the VELCO facility could perhaps be divided up among all Vermont counties. Eaton added that the plan does express concern about New Haven bearing an uneven burden for the required facility. Putnam asked what enforcement mechanisms, if any, exist for energy use targets. Eaton responded that to date no mechanisms exists, but the Global Warming Solutions Act might have changed that. Bev Landon if the Town could discuss this problem with Governor Scott. Eaton was skeptical that approach would work. Dupoise encouraged discussing the issue with State Representative Harvey Smith or State Senator Christopher Bray. Eaton said that Public Service Department attorney Elizabeth Tierney expressed some concern that towns could seek exemptions for a variety of high-energy uses, such as hospitals.

The group discussed whether VELCO planned to install solar panels to offset energy use. Eaton reported VELCO plans for a 32-kW rooftop array.

Putnam reminded the group about the timeline for adopting the energy plan. Eaton said the only change she plans to make is to include a footnote about the VELCO solar projections.

Landon motioned to move forward the draft energy plan as presented with the future addition of the solar generation at VELCO to be included. Pat Palmer seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Putnam reminded the group about the need to approve the Town Energy Report to accompany the Energy Plan. The document essentially certifies that the Planning Commission believes the Energy Plan complies with state law. Kathy Cahill made a motion to accept the Town of New Haven Energy Report. Landon seconded. Motion approved 5-0.

Eaton motioned to hold the hearing for December 14, 2020 at 6:00 PM. Landon seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

IV. Zoning Revisions

Cahill, Landon, Eaton, and Brown previously discussed the updated zoning map, created by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission. The group advises removing road labels for streets that are not in New Haven (ex: Hardscrabble Road), adding the names of bordering towns, clarifying footage calculations around Campground Road, and extend the southern portion of the map to show that Cobble and Halpin Covered Bridge Roads are in both New Haven and Middlebury.

Brown raised the issue that current regulations hold that building permits must be for projects completed within two years. Some towns allow projects to start within two years. The group agreed that having the current two-year deadline in place, with an opportunity to apply for an extension, encourages property owners not to leave half-finished projects in place.

V. Review of the October 27, 2020 Minutes

Eaton motioned to approve the minutes. Cahill seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

VI. Adjourn

Pat Palmer thanked Eaton for her work on the energy plan and motioned to adjourn. Eaton seconded. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Brown