

**Brandon Energy Committee Meeting
December 3, 2018**

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

Also in Attendance: Barbara Noyes-Pulling, Stephanie Jerome

1. Call to order

Michael Shank, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

2. Agenda Approval

A motion was made by Jack Schneider 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 November 5, 2018 Energy Committee meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Planning for January 12th Workshop on Cold Climate Heat Pumps, Zero Energy Homes

Michael Shank advised he will be placing information on Facebook and Front Porch Forum regarding the upcoming January 12th Efficiency Vermont workshop on cold climate heat pumps and zero energy homes. Mr. Shank asked that Committee members reach out to people regarding the workshop to increase attendance. The workshop will be held at the Town Hall beginning 2:30PM. Mr. Shank will provide the Committee a draft of the announcement for their approval.

5. Update on Ads for Preferred Renewable Energy Sites

Mr. Shank reported he has received a call from a resident of Arnold District concerning the outreach for preferred renewable energy sites. It was questioned whether the mapping of the preferred sites would include residents' names and Barbara Noyes-Pulling advised the sites need to be quantified and a running total maintained, but property owners' names do not need to be published. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised that in looking at a solar farm, one megawatt would be about eight acres. If the energy source is wind, it would 16 acres for one megawatt. Ms. Noyes-Pulling noted when Sudbury mapped their Energy Plan; they developed a Table of Parcel numbers that indicated how many acres were applicable to solar. Stephanie Jerome suggested it be confirmed that the acreage in Arnold District is in Brandon. Mr. Shank reported there was one other resident that contacted the Town Manager, but Mr. Shank has not had the opportunity to have a discussion with that person. It was questioned how robust the preferred site list should be for the RRPC's approval. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised the list has to be equal or exceed the State's target the Town has been given. Brandon will likely not have a problem, as there is a 15-megawatt project in the works. Edna Sutton asked if there is any way to exercise what is in the Plan for the preferred sites as she was concerned with maximizing the decision-making to assure that the sites are what the Town desires to maximize the impact. Mr. Shank noted the only increase in power would be for the Town to receive substantial deference once the Energy Plan is approved. Ms. Noyes-Pulling suggested if there is not a large response to the preferred sites, the Plan could provide information on the properties that meet the Town's criteria. Mr. Shank suggested writing an article on Davenport Solar to share with the public the type of project that the Town desires. Mr. Shank advised he recently presented at the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network in Fairlee and noted the Committee could raise awareness for the purpose of an Energy Committee with offering workshops that are oriented around these topics. Ms. Noyes-Pulling

stated Brandon has a lot of three-phase power and will likely get attention for future projects as the Town has the infrastructure.

6. Discussion on Energy Plan Draft

Michael Shank reported he has been reviewing the Energy Plan draft and is working on the Table of Contents and replacing some of the images. Barbara Noyes-Pulling advised this Plan would be part of the Town Plan, but could go as a stand-alone. Ms. Noyes-Pulling will confirm the graphs and provide the Committee Chair with the final versions. Ms. Noyes-Pulling eliminated some of the verbiage that cannot be used. In speaking with the Select Board, Mr. Shank advised the Committee would need to provide information on the language that has been pulled, such as the language regarding view sheds. Mr. Shank noted there are references to scenic resources. Ms. Noyes-Pulling stated scenic resources have not been identified in the Town Plan and even that term cannot be used. Mr. Shank suggested the Plan could include a series of recommendations to the Town to add view shed information, etc. Ms. Noyes-Pulling noted the PUC has agreed to consider those areas that have been approved with the exact locations listed. If those areas were chosen for a project, the developers could potentially be required to pay for the analysis, if it is desired to have view sheds in the Town Plan. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised that prohibited areas of development would have to be prohibited across the board, not just for energy projects. It was suggested the Town identify the view sheds and place the onus on the developer to pay for the analysis. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised there are vendors around the State that would do work on view sheds. Mr. Shank recommended the Energy Committee draft a letter to recommend the Town engage in this exercise and obtain bids for a potential vendor. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised Rutland Town has been working with a class from Middlebury College to do the research of view sheds in that area. She also recommended the public could be surveyed to determine the areas that they would like see preserved. Mr. Shank and Ms. Sutton will draft a letter to the Select Board regarding the view shed subject. Ms. Noyes-Pulling stated the other items for the Plan that need to be completed would be local constraints, such as current use parcels, noting there is a placeholder around current use. Mr. Shank suggested in terms of local constraints, there could be historic sites, current use and perhaps a placeholder language for view sheds. Ms. Noyes Pulling recommended also reviewing the maps to assure that everything is noted that is desired. The one last big item would be the strategies that have to include conservation, transportation and land use. Edna Sutton suggested setting a cycle for review of the Energy Plan in the document. Ms. Noyes-Pulling reiterated that a review of the maps should be done to assure that areas where the Town does not desire projects, conservation areas and impervious areas are noted. Mr. Shank summarized that the Committee members are to review the maps; Ms. Sutton and he will draft a letter to the Select Board with regard to view sheds, with a placeholder to be included in the Plan if the Town agrees they would like to move on this subject. The deadline for submitting the Plan to the Select Board is an April timeframe. Ms. Noyes-Pulling suggested going through the text and the mapping could be done from the text. She also suggested a draft could be sent to the RRPC for their review prior to submitting it for final approval. The Committee agreed on January 7th for the draft to be completed for submission to the RRPC for comment. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised there is another category of avoidance versus reference, which is another indicator and is another way to show that everyone needs to conserve, but noted some Towns did not desire this information be included in the plan.

7. Old/New Business

Jack Schneider questioned where the alternate locations were that the Town Manager had provided to Conti Solar. It was noted they were in the Nickerson/Carver Street area; however, the PUC was not in favor of a change in location. It was questioned whether the area state representatives could work with the PUC to provide flexibility for towns to provide recommendations. Stephanie Jerome was agreeable to addressing this item in Montpelier. Michael Shank will email the Town Manager to confirm the locations recommended to Conti Solar.

Michael Shank advised Paul Markowitz of Vermont Energy Investment Corporation would like to do a presentation in Town about energy committees. Mr. Shank will work with Mr. Markowitz to schedule a workshop sometime in January. The workshop would be held at the town hall and open to the public. Mr. Shank advised Tesla has also requested to do a workshop and he will organize this event that will be hosted by the Energy Committee potentially in February.

The Committee will continue to work on the final rough draft of the Energy Plan, to include a review the maps. Mr. Shank noted the maps would be submitted as recommendations, which could be amended. Mr. Shank will contact the Town Manager to discuss the Town's efficiency efforts. Ms. Noyes-Pulling stated it would be helpful to include the Town's efforts in the Energy Plan.

10. Next Meeting

Next Meeting will be Monday, January 7, 2019 @ 5PM in the Brandon Town Office

12. Adjournment

The Committee Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary