

Minutes:

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Joint Act 250/Section 248 Committee and Energy Committee Meeting

4:30 pm September 24, 2015

1. Call to Order: 4:30

2. Discussion of where the two committees want to go. Work within the current statute or change the statute? Generally the committee members feel that they need to work within the current statute while supporting member towns. Part of the support for member towns will need to be looking at the current structure and making recommendations to the Solar Siting Committee on how the process contained in the current statute needs to be changed.

Committee members agreed that the current structure is broken because it does not give a reasonable input process for local communities. Any suggested changes to statute will need to be developed soon because the legislature will be starting up again in January. The Public Service Board does not currently have adequate guidance to review these solar applications. The current statute was created to address Nuclear, oil, coal and wood burning power plants which generate a lot of electricity in a small space. Solar requires much more land for the same power and needs different standards.

Of concern to members is the fact that ACRPC staff will not likely have enough resources to review and comment on every application. The Act 250 committee needs clear guidance on how to review the applications as well. They have already decided that every application greater than 125kw needs a thorough review but there are no standards to review against.

Act 56 has improved the ability for towns to have an impact but the changes may not be adequate. ACRPC believes the PSB needs to acknowledge the local and regional plans and utilize them in reviewing an application.

3. Selectboard Letter: The committee reviewed the draft letter to selectboards and found itself getting mired in wordsmithing. Chico made a motion to send the letter as it was edited in discussion, seconded by Steve. After some discussion about sending off a letter which still has some issues, the committees decided that action was necessary and that it was not wise to put the letter off any longer. The motion passed with one nay vote.

4. Draft 45 day letter: Discussion centered around the first two items under aesthetic mitigation standards. After some discussion, the committee decided to remove the first two items from the list. The first concentrated on the term "affected" vs. "Abutting". The committee felt that affected was too all-encompassing and that the sentiment was already contained within the lead-in paragraph. The second item was an attempt to set an exposure limit to the public. This item was also removed as it was not well developed.

Following this discussion to remove the first two items on the mitigation list, the committee decided that there were enough format and grammar errors that it would be good to have the entire document reformatted. Mary Anne was asked to take a look at the document and try to put it into some form that would be more effective than the current edition. She will do so and get the result back to the joint committees before the next joint meeting.

5. The next joint meeting was set up to coincide with the regularly scheduled ACT 250 committee meeting October 1 at 4:30 pm at ACRPC. Adam will be invited to attend.

6. Meeting Adjourn: 6:15

Members present: Ellen Kurrelmeyer, Steve Revell, Andrew Manning, Ed Payne, Jeremy Grip, David Hamilton, Chico Martin, Mary Anne Sullivan, Adam Lougee, Tim Bouton

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