

# Natural Resources Committee

## DRAFT Minutes

*Feb 8, 2017*

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<b>Committee Members:</b>	Barrie Bailey, Nick Causton, Colin Davis, Peter Grant, Stan Grzyb, Wendy Sue Harper (Chair), Arabella Holzpfel, Ed Payne, Ron Payne, Paul Wagner, Kent Wright
<b>Present:</b>	Barrie Bailey, Peter Grant, Arabella Holzpfel (acting Chair), Ed Payne, Ron Payne, Paul Wagner, Kent Wright
<b>Staff:</b>	Kevin Behm

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Arabella opened the meeting at 6:00. The revised Dec 14th minutes were moved for approval. (Peter motion, Barrie 2<sup>nd</sup>). All were in favor. The Jan 11<sup>th</sup> minutes were also available for approval. Peter motioned for approval and Kent 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.

Ed had concerns about the recent Regenerative Soils Act and S. 51, an energy bill which would legislate the renewable energy goals of the State Energy Plan. He felt that the both were top-down requirements that didn't take individual property owners circumstances into consideration. Furthermore, they would both increase costs for homeowners and farmers. He felt that Vermont citizens were being burdened with meeting unattainable energy goals while out-of-state energy developers were building energy generation facilities with tax breaks, and selling the Renewable Energy Credits out-of-state. At a minimum, the RECs should be retired in Vermont and apply to the Vermont energy goals. Paul also felt the claimed energy production from renewable facilities is far less than advertised – he has seen values as low as 30% for wind and 10% for solar.

Kevin provided copies of the regional energy maps developed using the Public Service Dept's methodology. These will be used in developing the regional energy plan and also subdivided into individual town maps for use in municipal energy planning. Individual towns may approach energy planning differently than the methodology of the PSD, but a town would have to demonstrate that the areas proposed for siting renewable generation would be adequate to meet the State goal of 90% renewable energy by 2050. The potential siting maps are one part of the energy planning process.

Ron commented that in reviewing the potential wind siting map it did not appear that some of the best areas for wind energy were identified. Kevin responded that the base or raw wind energy data was a composite of wind speed availability at 30 meter, 50 meters, and 70 meters height. Using that raw resource map, the PSD methodology removed areas that had 'known constraints' and flagged other areas having 'possible constraints'. The desirable areas for siting wind energy development were areas having no constraints which were not necessarily the areas with the best wind resource. Peter asked if the wind siting maps considered turbine or blade noise since that is a health concern. Kevin responded that that issue would have to be addressed on an individual site issue.

The Committee adjourned at 6:55