

**Southern Windsor County
Regional Planning Commission**

Minutes of Monday, March 25, 2019
Martin Memorial Hall, Ascutney, VT

Commissioners Present: Joe Wilson, Springfield; Wayne Wheelock, Baltimore; Peter Daniels, Weathersfield; Tom Bock, Chester; Etienne Ting, Cavendish; Tom Kenyon, West Windsor; Joe Fromberger, Andover.

Staff Present: Tom Kennedy, Jason Rasmussen, Chris Titus, Anthony Summers

Others Present: Fredda Kischko, Daniel Pettigrew, Eva Pettigrew

Joe Wilson opened the meeting at 12:10 PM.

1. Changes to the Agenda
 - a. Discussion of the proposed solar project was moved from item 5 to 2.
2. Request for a preferred site letter for a solar project on French Meadow Road in Springfield
 - a. Jason Rasmussen reported that we have received a request from Norwich Technologies for a “preferred site” letter in accordance with the Public Utility Commission Rules for a proposed 500 kW solar project on French Meadow Road in Springfield. For projects not otherwise listed in the PUC Rules as a “preferred site”, they can be considered as such if documented in letter signed by the Springfield Selectboard, Springfield Planning Commission and the Regional Planning Commission. A joint public meeting was held on March 13, 2019, which included a site visit and public meeting in the Town Hall. Jason reported that some issues occurred: The Town was made aware that not all abutters were notified. Being informed that no decisions would be made that evening, some abutters left after the public meeting, but before the regular Planning Commission began. The Planning Commission ended up making a decision later that evening. The solar developer has informed us that the project design is being modified. Therefore, Jason suggested that the Board take no action at this time.
 - b. Some of the abutters – Fredda Kischko, Daniel Pettigrew and Eva Pettigrew – expressed their concerns with the project and the process, including not notifying all abutters and concern about what the project is going to look like from their properties. The abutters also indicated that the developers have apparently been in contact with the Halls, who also abut the project, but they have not contacted them.
 - c. *Tom Bock made a motion to table this discussion until Norwich Technologies can provide revised documentation. Second by Peter Daniels. Motion passed.*
3. Secretary’s Report
 - a. *Peter Daniels made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2019 meeting. Second by Etienne Ting. Joe Fromberger abstained. Motion passed.*

4. Treasurer's Report

- a. *Tom Bock made a motion to accept the February 2019 Treasurer's Report. Second by Peter Daniels. Motion passed.*

5. Discussion of RPC Purchasing the Ennis Building

- a. Tom Kennedy gave an update on the decision making process about buying the Ennis Building, reviewing an acquisition pro forma, a draft Purchase and Sales Agreement and a draft Resolution for Purchase. A number of questions were raised about whether the RPC should take on property management, risks associated with building condition and vacancies, likely increases in rent if someone else buys the building, and other issues.
- b. *Peter Daniels made a motion to adopt the Resolution, as modified, to authorize the Executive Committee to negotiate and to authorize the Chair to sign a Purchase and Sales Agreement for property located at 20 and 38 Ascutney Park Place in Ascutney, Vermont to be used by the SWCRPC for offices for a sum not to exceed \$260,000. Second by Etienne Ting. A roll call vote was held: Joe Fromberger, no; Etienne Ting, yes; Tom Kenyon, yes; Tom Bock, yes; Wayne Wheelock, no; Peter Daniels, yes; Joe Wilson, yes (Yeses: 5, Nos: 2). Motion passed.*
- c. A copy of proposed Bylaw changes were provided. The changes correspond with the purchase, and cite the state statute allowing RPCs to purchase property. Bylaw amendments require a 30 day notification. The next Board meeting will be scheduled to accommodate the notice requirement, allowing a vote to amend the bylaws at the next RPC meeting.

6. Transportation Project Prioritization

- a. *Peter Daniels made a motion to approve the Transportation Project Prioritization as recommended by the Transportation Advisory Committee. Second by Etienne Ting. Motion passed.*

7. Pre-Candidate Town Highway Bridge Program Prioritization

- a. *Peter Daniels made a motion to approve the Pre-Candidate Town Highway Bridge Project Prioritization as recommended by the Transportation Advisory Committee. Second by Tom Bock. Motion passed.*

8. Updates

- a. Tom Kennedy and Tom Bock provided updates on legislation:
 - The Legislature has been very active; 850 bills were introduced this year.
 - The Act 250 bill did not make crossover.
 - S.96 includes a regional project delivery concept, where RPCs would serve a grant administration role similar to what we are doing now with the Water Quality Block Grant program.
 - H.384 involves a proposed 4¢/gallon increase to the gas tax for municipal road maintenance needs. It is projected to raise \$23 million.

- b. Tom Kennedy indicated that the region is now eligible for grants through the Northern Borders Regional Commission. Letters of Notification are due this Friday for a program that funds economic development-related infrastructure projects, such as roads, bridges, water and sewer systems, broadband, and outdoor recreation.
9. Old Business
- a. Draft Personnel Policies have been provided to the Committee for review.
10. Adjourn
- a. *Wayne Wheelock made a motion to adjourn. Second by Tom Kenyon. Motion passed.*
The meeting was adjourned at about 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Rasmussen