

**Town of Middlebury
Energy Committee Meeting Minutes
* DRAFT *
Wednesday, August 17, 2016**

Present: Heather Seeley, Diane Munroe, Jason Kaye, Ross Conrad, Howard Widelitz
Absent: Chris Robbins, R.J. Adler
Guests: Nadine Barnicle

Review minutes of the July 20, 2016 meeting

Ross suggested one typo correction. Diane moved and Heather seconded approval of the minutes as amended. Approved with 5 in favor, none opposed, and two absent.

Transportation Survey - Summary Report

We reviewed the final draft of the Transportation Survey summary report, prepared by Nadine Barnicle. The committee had reviewed an initial draft during our July meeting, at which time we had suggested some changes including adding more narrative analysis to the data and using more visual graphs to represent the data. Nadine stated that she is not comfortable making the changes to the summary report that the Energy Committee suggested, as she thought it would diverge from similar reports that she drafted for other Energy Committees that conducted a similar transportation survey. Nadine said that if the committee would like to see more included in the report, members should decide what more to include and make the appropriate changes.

As such, when reviewing the changes from the first draft of the report, Nadine mentioned she had not made many changes and that these consisted of minor adjustments to some of the formatting.

After some discussion, the committee concluded that this report is strictly a summary of the data and that the report itself may not work as an outreach document. It was agreed the committee would take responsibility for further compilation of the raw data and provide some analysis prior to any outreach to the community.

Howard asked if it is understood where we want to go with this and what is the objective and the message we are trying to get across. Heather mentioned she wasn't sure of the message the survey is trying to convey. Nadine responded by saying last four bullets sum up where we want to go with this. There are a lot of pieces we can extract from this and that there a lot of layers to sift through (e.g. behavior, climate change). Her thought was to start with outreach since the results of the survey demonstrated a lack of awareness.

Heather moved and Diane seconded approval of the Transportation Survey Summary Report as amended. Approved with 5 in favor, none opposed, and two absent.

Transportation Survey - Next Steps

The first half of this discussion focused on the New England Grassroots Environment Fund (NEGEF) \$5,000 grant received by the Weybridge Energy Committee. As discussed during our July meeting, the Weybridge Energy Committee will be spearheading this "Transportation Regional Hub Coordinator" project.

Now that the grant application is approved, Nadine Barnicle and Fran Putnam, both of the Weybridge Energy Committee, will be stewarding the Middlebury Energy Committee through a few initiatives aimed at improving regional coordination of transportation-related efforts. The first project is for Middlebury Energy Committee members to implement Trip Diaries to help us hone in on our own transportation behaviors.

Nadine and Fran will be attending our September meeting to introduce the Trip Diaries project, and they will attend our October meeting to discuss our results.

After our trial with the Trip Diaries, we'll discuss how to use this tool for broader public engagement. The intent is for everyone to learn from their experiences with the Trip Diaries.

Another initiative of the grant project is to bring together the participating Energy Committees and other entities (e.g. ACTR) for a meeting with the Regional Planning Commission to discuss the findings. This meeting would most likely occur around January 2017.

The discussion then shifted to additional next steps beyond the Transportation Survey.

Regarding the desire by survey respondents to increase bus service to East Middlebury, Heather mentioned a discussion she had with Amy Sheldon about the changing demographics in East Middlebury, and it being the only area of town with an increase in the number of children. Diane suggested the Trip Diaries could be deployed in East Middlebury to better understand the transportation behavior in this part of town.

Regarding a brief presentation of the Transportation Survey report to the Selectboard, Heather said she can speak to the survey at the upcoming Selectboard meeting on August 23. She said she will highlight a few of the key points in the report and provide remarks on the next steps. The report will be provided to Kathleen Ramsay by the end of this week.

Nadine suggested adding another "next step" item to the Transportation Survey report to address the NEGEF grant and its related initiatives. Ross moved and Howard seconded a motion to amend the report to reflect this change. Approved with 5 in favor, none opposed, and two absent.

Review draft memo regarding Energy Section of Town Plan

Our goal was to finalize the memo for possible approval by the end of the discussion. Committee members discussed a variety of changes, mostly the fine-tuning of language.

Some notable changes are included below:

- Regarding the "Compliance with Act 174" section, we provided reference to two supporting documents from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, and attached these documents to the final memo.
- Regarding Goal #1 of the "Efficiency and Conservation" section, we discussed that this state goal is probably not achievable within this timeframe and whether it was appropriate for us to change the date at the local level. It was agreed that we need to maintain compliance with the state goals even if we don't think they are realistic.
- Regarding Goal #2 of the "Renewable Energy" section, Howard spoke of his concern whether to include this goal since Middlebury itself does not have much control over it. This goal calls for 25% of Middlebury's energy to be met with renewables by 2025. Howard mentioned that Middlebury does not have much control over what kind of power is provided to the community by a utility like Green Mountain Power. Ultimately, we took note of this concern but chose to keep the goal in the memo.

Ross moved and Heather seconded approval of the memo as amended and to send the memo to Town Planner Jen Murray. Approved with 5 in favor, none opposed, and two absent.

Jason will include a note to Jen saying that we would be willing to attend the Planning Commission's meeting when they are discussing the Energy Section. Heather added to this request to ask Jen to let us know when this will be on the Planning Commission's agenda.

As a general note, Heather said that she thought that it should be a Town staff function to write the Town Plan sections, rather than relying on volunteer committees. Howard clarified that our memo is only a proposal and that Town staff have full editing privileges.

Check-in regarding MEC members' capacity between meetings

For lack of time, this discussion was deferred to the next Energy Committee meeting.

Vermont Energy Dashboard (addition to the agenda)

Diane mentioned that the Vermont Natural Resources Council would like to train us on the Vermont Energy Dashboard. They were offering training to 15 communities. Diane reiterated for those not part of earlier discussions that the Dashboard is an online platform to post energy-saving actions and includes a social media aspect for sharing these actions. It can also be used to help a community measure its progress toward state energy goals. Diane recommended November as the timeframe for this training.

Additional Notes

Ross suggested adding into these minutes a recommendation that when committee members can't attend the meeting to let the other committee members or the chair know.

We also discussed the fact that we have room for two more people on the committee. Heather said she will check with Kathleen to see if it has been advertised.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25am on a motion by Ross, seconded by Diane. Next meeting: September 21 at 8:15am.

Respectfully submitted,
Howard Widelitz