

Here are some thoughts/content:

**Examples of Energy Action Plans in Vermont:**

Hartford VT: <https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/1005/Energy-Action-Plan--Final-March-2017>

Burlington VT: <https://www.burlingtonelectric.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/NetZeroEnergy-Roadmap.pdf>

Manchester VT: <http://manchester-vt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Manchester-Energy-Plan-Proposed-for-Public-Hearing-06-10-2019.pdf>

Windham Regional Energy Action

Plan: [https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs\\_Plans\\_Reports/Act\\_174/WRC/REP\\_final\\_ForAdoption\\_20180406\\_highres.pdf](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs_Plans_Reports/Act_174/WRC/REP_final_ForAdoption_20180406_highres.pdf)

Each of these should meet the State's Act 174 requirements.

**On your questions:**

**What IS such a plan?** In short, an Energy Action Plan is a strategic planning document that lays out goals and possible actions to reduce energy consumption by increasing energy efficiency and procuring more renewable energy. In the State of Vermont, if a municipality wants to meet the requirements of Act 174 then the plan produced needs to meet the checklist requirements they have in place ( [https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs\\_Plans\\_Reports/Act\\_174/Municipal%20Standards\\_Abridged\\_Final.pdf](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs_Plans_Reports/Act_174/Municipal%20Standards_Abridged_Final.pdf) )

**What does the town want from such a plan?** In Vermont, at least, the main reason to do an Energy Action Plan is to guide energy reductions and renewable energy increases in a way that meets Act 174 standards. Act 174 standards are voluntary, but by completing an Energy Action Plan, a municipality has greater input and weight in the Section 248 siting process for energy generation. There are other reasons that municipalities create an energy action plan as opposed to other types of plans - I outline those in the next question.

**Does it even want such a plan?** This is the 64 million dollar question. Considering what plan options exist and what those plans typically address may help think through what a community's real goals are for creating a plan and therefore help guide what type of plan to focus on. There are 4 common and related community level plan types. These terms are sometimes used interchangeably (usually for political reasons) but they should be considered distinct from each other:

1 Energy Action Plans - as noted above, focus on increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy. They can but do not always have a GHG emission reduction goal (to meet the State of Vermont Act 174 guidelines they do have to have that aspect). These plans frequently do not include significant public engagement in their creation (not always, but typically)

2 Sustainability Plans - They sometimes include climate aspects, but their real focus is usually on broad environmental sustainability considerations (trees, greenspace, water, etc). These plans sometimes include significant public engagement in their creation (maybe 50/50)

3 Climate Adaptation Plan - these plans focus on understanding projected climate change and its impacts for a community and then map out strategies and actions to reduce the population vulnerabilities, and infrastructure/ecosystem risks associated with climate change. Adaptation plans do not include energy aspects (aside from issues around access to energy or energy burden considerations for vulnerable populations. These plans typically include public engagement in their creation.

4 Climate Action Plan - at their best, climate action plans really should address the issues included in each of the above. A full climate action plan should have clear energy and ghg emission targets, strategies, and actions; address climate adaptation and resilience issues; and integrate broad environmental sustainability concerns (at least as far as they may relate to climate mitigation and adaptation considerations). In my view, these are the most comprehensive of the 4 plan types (other than the "sustainability plans" that are really Climate Action Plans in disguise). These plans typically include public engagement in their creatio.

Three of the 4 plans (1, 2, and 4) , if done well, will meet the requirements of Act 174. Which one is best for a community really boils down to what the community's goals are in creating the plan. Generally, my advice would be that developing a Climate Action Plan will provide a community with a more robust and thorough planning document and is often the strongest choice.

However, if a community is not interested in addressing climate adaptation and vulnerability considerations nor interested in broader sustainability considerations, then an Energy Action Plan is the right tool. Communities may be interested in climate adaptation and broader sustainability considerations, but perhaps they have already created an adaptation plan or a sustainability plan that did not include energy and GHG mitigation....in this instance, creating an Energy Action Plan also makes sense as a companion piece to their other plan(s). In the instance of CEAC, their planning effort is focusing on GHG emission sectors as a mitigation plan (really an energy action plan) but their intent is to create a companion Climate Adaptation Plan to address climate risks, vulnerabilities, and adaptation.

Here are some examples of Climate Action Plans and Climate Adaptation Plans to compare with the Energy Action Plans: <https://palebluedot.llc/cap-examples-for-team>

I hope that helps!

Please let me know if you have any more questions or if there is anything I can do to help. If it would be helpful, I would be happy to talk with the group from Middlebury to go over these ideas, share examples, answer questions, etc.