

Agenda Summary
January 17, 2017

Agenda Item No. 3
Act 174 Enhanced Energy Planning

Summary: Lea Kilvadyova, LCPC Regional Planner, and Tasha Wallis, LCPC Executive Director, will be here to go over the requirements of Act 174. As a result of Act 174 relating to improving the siting of renewable energy generation facilities, municipalities have an option to develop Enhanced Energy Plans. Enhanced Energy Plans that are certified for compliance with state energy policy will gain substantial deference in energy siting decisions made by the Public Service Board.

With funding support from the Department of Public Service, LCPC will assist three interested municipalities in Lamoille County with drafting municipal Enhanced Energy Plans that are consistent with the provisions of Act 174. Developing an Enhanced Energy Plan that is consistent with the provisions of Act 174 is not mandatory; it's a municipality's choice to do so.

The Enhanced Energy Planning process is much broader and deeper than addressing only siting issues. Municipalities need to be committed to understanding how energy is consumed across sectors and how this relates to municipal land use policies; what steps the municipality will take to reduce energy consumption, transition away from non-renewable energy consumption, and move towards the adoption of renewable energy; what renewable energy development is appropriate within the municipality, and where and how it can be best developed.

At this time, a regional or local Enhanced Energy Plan hasn't been developed or certified. Therefore, it is not applicable to the proposed solar array applications proposed for 1568 Moscow Road or Lot #6 on Cady Hill Road.

Town Plan Impact: See energy section of the Town Plan.

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: Move to request that LCPC consider the Town of Stowe as one of the communities it assists with developing an Enhanced Energy Plan.

Agenda Summary
January 17, 2017

Agenda Item No. 4

Review of solar project application for a proposed project located at 1568 Moscow Road

Summary: Stowe Cady Hill Solar, LLC, has submitted an application to the Public Service Board for a Certificate of Public Good to construct a 496kW (AC) Photovoltaic Group Net Metering System in Stowe, Vermont. Enclosed is a copy of the aesthetic report that was included in the developer's application. A copy of the complete application is on file in the Town Manager's Office for public inspection.

Town Plan Impact: Energy Policy # 17: The Town of Stowe supports the installation of commercial/utility scale solar power generating facilities in appropriate locations as long as they provide a clear, direct benefit to the local Stowe Community and meet the following standards:

- a) Power generating facilities and accessory structures must meet the minimum setback requirements for the zoning district(s) in which they are located.
- b) Solar arrays, transmission and distribution lines, accessory structures and access roads are to be located on non-agricultural land or along field edges to avoid fragmentation of, and to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts to, agricultural land and open fields.
- c) Solar facilities are to be sited outside of, or to the edge of scenic views or viewsheds so that they are not a prominent focal point.
- d) Facilities should be screened from view through the use of existing topography, structures, vegetation or strategically placed tree, shrub and ground cover plantings that do not block distant views.

Fiscal Impact: The estimated cost to intervene, hire experts, legal counsel, and participate in the hearing process if one is called is \$30,000 +.

The energy from the project is proposed to be fed into SED's grid and, as net metering systems, will be measured and used to offset the consumption of SED customers that buy into the project. SED will be required to purchase the energy at a rate of \$0.19/kWh, per statute. This is as much as 50% more expensive than energy we could buy elsewhere. This is the direct cost of the projects.

There is also an indirect cost to the ratepayers. It's important to note that the owners of the projects have elected to retain the Renewable Energy Credits generated by the systems rather than allocate them to SED. As such, these projects will not help SED achieve the requirements from the Renewable Energy Standard. While the Nebraska Valley Solar Farm covers much of SED's requirements in the mid-term, the statute as enacted contains a penalty of \$0.06 for each kWh a utility comes up short in Tier 2, the category these two projects would have contributed towards. So, in effect, we may need to purchase equivalent RECs elsewhere that may cost as much as \$0.06/kWh.

Recommendation: No action is necessary at this time, unless the Planning Commission and/or Selectboard desires to provide comment to the Public Service Board in response to the application.

Agenda Summary
January 17, 2017

Agenda Item No. 5

Review of solar project application for a proposed project located at Lot #6, Cady Hill Rd

Summary: Stowe Cady Hill Solar, LLC, has submitted an application to the Public Service Board for a Certificate of Public Good to construct a 496kW (AC) solar group net metering facility in Stowe, Vermont, to be known as the “Cady Hill Solar Project.” Enclosed is a copy of the aesthetic report that was included in the developer’s application. A copy of the complete application is on file in the Town Manager’s Office for public inspection.

Also, enclosed is a draft response to the application indicating that the project raises significant issues with regards to aesthetics and that it would unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region. It also outlines several Stowe Town Plan clear community standards that would be violated if the project were to move forward as proposed.

In addition, enclosed is a copy of the Stowe Electric Department’s Motion to Dismiss and Motion to Intervene. Finally, enclosed are comments from several private property owners.

Town Plan Impact: Energy Policy # 17: The Town of Stowe supports the installation of commercial/utility scale solar power generating facilities in appropriate locations as long as they provide a clear, direct benefit to the local Stowe Community and meet the following standards:

- a) Power generating facilities and accessory structures must meet the minimum setback requirements for the zoning district(s) in which they are located.
- b) Solar arrays, transmission and distribution lines, accessory structures and access roads are to be located on non-agricultural land or along field edges to avoid fragmentation of, and to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts to, agricultural land and open fields.
- c) Solar facilities are to be sited outside of, or to the edge of scenic views or viewsheds so that they are not a prominent focal point.
- d) Facilities should be screened from view through the use of existing topography, structures, vegetation or strategically placed tree, shrub and ground cover plantings that do not block distant views.

Fiscal Impact: The estimated cost to intervene, hire experts, legal counsel, and participate in the hearing process if one is called is \$30,000 +.

The energy from the project is proposed to be fed into SED’s grid and, as net metering systems, will be measured and used to offset the consumption of SED customers that buy into the project. SED will be required to purchase the energy at a rate of \$0.19/kWh, per statute. This is as much as 50% more expensive than energy we could buy elsewhere. This is the direct cost of the projects.

There is also an indirect cost to the ratepayers. It’s important to note that the owners of the projects have elected to retain the Renewable Energy Credits generated by the systems rather than allocate them to SED. As such, these projects will not help SED achieve the requirements

from the Renewable Energy Standard. While the Nebraska Valley Solar Farm covers much of SED's requirements in the mid-term, the statute as enacted contains a penalty of \$0.06 for each kWh a utility comes up short in Tier 2, the category these two projects would have contributed towards. So, in effect, we may need to purchase equivalent RECs elsewhere that may cost as much as \$0.06/kWh.

Recommendation: Move to instruct the Town Attorney to file a response to the application with the Public Service Board requesting the Town of Stowe be granted party status and to request a hearing.