

February 20, 2008  
VSPC Public Participation Subcommittee Meeting

The Public Participation Subcommittee met from 10 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Attendees in person and by phone: Jenny Cole, Jack Collins, Deena Frankel, Molly Hooker Hatfield, Cathy Miglorie, James Moore, Dottie Schnure, Mary Sullivan, Steve Wark.

Agenda:

1. Minutes; review of subcommittee charter
2. Public versus committee-only access to information on the website (Deena Frankel)
3. Reports and discussion of current or planned public involvement processes: DPS public engagement for Vermont's Energy Future (Steve Wark); East Avenue/Gorge Area Reinforcement outreach (Dottie Schnure)
4. Public involvement for projects that do not require detailed NTA analysis
5. Community groups for public participation
6. Updates: Website and VSPC communication, VSPC recruitment
7. Discussion of items for March 11 VSPC meeting
8. Update on the Southern Loop public engagement process

There were no further corrections to the minutes of the December 19, 2007 meeting or to the Subcommittee Charter.

Item 2: Deena explained that the Procedures Committee is working on the Information Management Protocol required by the Docket 7081 MOU, which will establish how the VSPC handles information that is exempt from the public records law but relevant to the VSPC process.

Item 3: Steve distributed a PowerPoint presentation "Vermont's Energy Future" to subcommittee members prior to the meeting. This process has sought public input through regional workshops, deliberative polling and on-line conferences. Steve described the methods and results of the DPS public engagement process. It was noted that results of regional workshops and deliberative polling were similar. Further information is available at:

<http://www.vermontenergyfuture.info/Results%20and%20reports.html>

Dotty provided information on upcoming outreach for the GMP/VELCO Gorge Area Reinforcement Project. A stakeholder meeting is scheduled for March 13. An invitation will be sent to VSPC public members. Additional public meetings are scheduled.

Deena stated that additional public outreach is planned for the Southern Loop. An additional open house with information stations is planned for March 13, 2008.

It was observed that some people are more motivated than others to participate in public outreach, making it difficult to get a good cross section of public opinion. The Committee discussed engaging community groups, including local energy committees, in public involvement processes.

Item 4: Jenny expressed concern that there should be some type of notification/public outreach for projects that do not require detailed NTA analysis. There was discussion of contacting town managers. Jenny will follow up with Bruce Bentley on communication with contacts (such as Addison County Regional Planning) for the CVPS Middlebury/New Haven Reliability Project.

Item 5: There was discussion of community groups for VSPC public contacts. Jenny spoke with Deb Sachs about local energy committees and the potential for regional energy committees. Jenny will follow up with Molly on EVT resources.

Item 6: Deena stated that VELCO has contracted with SharePointHosting.com for web site hosting, and the site is being designed. James suggested including an interactive Vermont map so visitors to the site can find projects affecting specific locations. There was further discussion of how to engage communities, the importance of public awareness of the VSPC and transmission planning, and public involvement early in the process.

Jenny reported that she had contacted members of the Southern Loop Community Working Group to see if any members were interested in serving as VSPC alternates. No one has stepped forward.

Item 7: Subcommittee charters will be ratified at the March 11 meeting of the VSPC. Deena will provide an update on the VSPC web site. Jenny will put together a summary of Public Participation Subcommittee activities. Subcommittee reports are due by Feb 27.

The next Public Participation Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for April 9, from noon-2:00 p.m.