

Minutes
VSPC Public participation subcommittee meeting
February 13, 2009, 9 a.m., Burlington Electric Department

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In attendance: Jenny Cole, Chair (public rep); Steve Costello, CVPS; Dotty Schnure, GMP; Molly Hooker Hatfield, VEIC; Hantz Pr sum , VELCO; Deena Frankel, VELCO; Heidi Klein, Snelling Center (guest).

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the public outreach process for the VELCO Long-Range Transmission Plan (LRTP).

Heidi Klein from the Snelling Center for Government brought with her a draft of the proposed design for the public outreach sessions related to the LTRP release this spring. <<http://www.vermontspc.com/VPSC%20Subcommittees/One-PageDescription.pdf>>

Members of the outreach subcommittee offered the following general observations and recommendations:

- Previous GMP public sessions have been minimally attended.
- Focus on web strategy—be sure to supplement the information provided through the in-person sessions with opportunities to access information, pose questions and share concerns via a website.
- Challenging to keep the media interested.
- Be sure to share all media materials with newsroom and editorial page; they do not always share with one another.
- Caution re: language—utilities often use the term “project” rather “issue” which can lead to the perception of construction; use language that reflects early identification of potential issue for the future
- It was suggested that there be a Bennington/Rutland public forum. Deena explained that this had been considered, but resources did not allow another location.

After a review of the foci of potential information kiosks, subcommittee members suggested that the additional information would be useful to share with the public:

- Lay person’s explanation of 248
- Graphic: reflecting steps in the process
- Public participation opportunities in the planning of specific projects
- NTA screening process graphic – 3 key questions (funnel) then steps along the way

There was discussion about how public comments could be documented at kiosks by the use of flip chart, etc.

Subcommittee members suggested the following organizations be included in the targeted outreach and recruitment for participation at the public sessions:

- Town planners and select board members – do not assume that contact with the regional planners is sufficient

- Legislators—especially those in key committees and in communities with potential reliability deficiencies
- Organizations and Associations: CLF, VPIRG, Chamber of Commerce, AARP

Possible roles for members of the subcommittee and distribution utilities at the public sessions:

- Efficiency Vermont would like to assist in providing information for the kiosk on NTA
- DUs may want to provide information at the kiosk on the 2009 Analysis and/or a separate kiosk on subtransmission deficiencies

Next Steps:

Heidi will share the final dates and venues as well as the recommended timeline for new materials production at the VSPC meeting on 2/23