

Vermont System Planning Committee Public Participation Subcommittee

December 8, 2015—9:30-11:00 a.m.
Vermont Energy Investment Corporation

DRAFT MINUTES

Chairperson Kelly Lucci called the subcommittee to order at 11:03 a.m.

Participants: Andrea Cohen (VEC), Ed Delhagen (PSD), Deena Frankel (VELCO), Kelly Lucci (VEIC), Michael Kirick (business representative), Johanna Miller (VNRC) Dotty Schnure (GMP).

Check-in on current/recent efforts

The group received updates on and discussed a several recent public outreach processes and events.

- VECAN conference: Johanna reported that the conference was again very successful this year, with more than 250 participants. The conference included a panel on grid planning, which included Jim Sullivan of the Bennington RPC on the RPC energy planning effort, Asa Hopkins on the Comprehensive Energy Plan and Tom Dunn on transmission grid planning issues. It was well-attended with a number of interesting questions from the audience. The group suggested that the CEP and RPC presentations would be worthwhile for inclusion in the next VSPC agenda. [Deena subsequently contacted Jim and Asa, and these presentations are confirmed for Jan 20 VSPC meeting.]
- Comprehensive Energy Plan: Ed Delhagen described the current status of CEP drafting, stating that the PSD will be working with the Governor office on release the final plan. The group discussed the factors leading to measurable success of the public outreach process for the plan, including: bringing the conversation to people around the state, multiple channels for input over an extended period of time, outreach partners including the RPCs and VECAN/Energy Committees. The ability to demonstrate that the previous plan made a difference helped increase engagement with the current cycle as well. The group discussed the question, raised in the input process, of whether the 90%X2050 goal should be statutory. PSD received nearly 800 comments.
- EAN: Johanna and Dotty described the solar year campaign being developed by EAN through its public engagement working group.
- Solar Siting Task Force: Johanna reported on the progress of the task force which must present recommendations to the legislature next session. The current status of recommendations under discussion is posted at http://solartaskforce.vermont.gov/sites/solarsiting/files/documents/meeting_materials/Master_matrix_111315v3.pdf

Legislative session preview

- The group discussed likely issues and tenor of the upcoming legislative session, including net metering, the solar siting task force, the political climate in light of gubernatorial politics, and the fact that the implementation of Act 56/RES will be a work in progress before the PSB.
- Kelly reported on the work of the Joint Energy Committee during the interim between sessions.
- Energy labeling, gross receipts tax sunset, the independent advocate study and the carbon tax were also mentioned as probably topics.

VSPC evolution

- Deena reported on the discussion that has been taking place at the VSPC, VELCO Board and Operating Committee and individually with various stakeholders regarding the evolution of the VSPC in light of major changes in the energy environment since the process was established in 2007.
- The group discussed the value of having a forum for providing information about the grid, including the disconnect between load and potential generation sites, where capacity exists in the grid, and the factors that drive development siting.
- The group discussed that the Regional Planning Commissions may be an important presence that is not currently at the table.
- The group discussed multiple possible platforms and collaborative efforts to create a more comprehensive information source about the state of the grid.

Next steps, next meeting

- The group agreed to wait until the conversation about VSPC evolution has advanced further to schedule the next meeting, but with the intention of meeting sometime between the January and April quarterly meetings as needed.