

**NVDA Town Plan Review Committee Hearing Minutes
Regional Approval of the Municipal Plan for the Town of Morgan
Thursday, May 30th at 6 PM at the Morgan Town Office, 41 Meade Hill,
Morgan, VT**

From Town Plan Review Committee: Jeanne Desrochers, Coventry; Paul Brouha, Sutton; Amanda Carlson, Coventry.

NVDA Staff: Irene Nagle

Representing Town of Morgan: Steve Matson, Zoning Administrator and Planning Commission; Shawn Austin, Charles Woods, Planning Commission; Larry Labor, and Robert Guyer, Select Board

Prior to the opening of the Regional Approval hearing, the committee voted to have Jeanne Desrochers act as Chair. The hearing opened at approximately 6:05 p.m.

Irene Nagle explained the purpose of regional approval of local plans as per 24 V.S.A. §4350, and the benefits it affords Towns.

Irene noted that the updated Plan contained all the required elements and was consistent with the State planning goals. She shared the comments in the Town Consultation report which included recommendations for future updates, including corrections to the adoption dates of the Plans of adjacent Towns, and updates after the most recent federal census data is released after 2020. It was noted that these amendments aren't required but could be helpful, as the adopted plan will not expire for eight years.

Jeanne asked whether the plan was a minor amendment or a comprehensive update, and what motivated the Town to update the Plan. Steve Matson explained that the Plan was expired and needed to be updated, and the Town wanted substantial deference so made a major update to the energy section.

Town residents asked about Village Center designation and what this entailed. Irene explained the benefits of such designation and noted that the Plan includes language that will enable the Town to move forward with an application for this designation if it decides to do so.

Town residents asked whether NVDA knew when updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps would be issued by FEMA for the Town of Morgan. Irene did not know when these would be available.

Paul asked if there was a concern about development around Lake Seymour to protect water quality from the impact of septic systems. The Planning Commission noted that septic has not been identified as a problem, although phosphorous from runoff has been a problem occasionally.

Jeanne asked about testing of wells in Morgan and noted that Coventry applied for a USDA grant to fund an arsenic treatment facility for the water system.

Jeanne asked about the impact to the Town of the school closing. A Select Board member noted that the school building is rented to a private school and the rental income generates about \$48,000 a year for the Town (this was not mentioned in the Plan).

The committee and planning commission members discussed limitations of cell and internet service, but felt that the town didn't have the ability to improve service – they were dependent on the utility company to improve service.

The Town Plan Committee asked about ATV use, and the Planning Commission noted that this was not addressed in the Plan because it has not yet been identified as a controversial issue, although they recognize that it is an issue that is coming and will require future consideration. It was noted that both economic benefits and negative impacts have been associated with opening trails and roads to ATVs.

The Town Plan review committee noted that on page 42, the 215 MW of new renewable energy should be corrected to 215 MWh.

Amanda asked the Planning Commission about implementation of the Plan and noted that it would be helpful to identify the individuals or committees that would be responsible for certain implementation actions, or to note that individuals are needed to volunteer in order to assist in implementation.

Paul Brouha made a motion to recommend approval of the Morgan Town Plan, which was seconded by Amanda Carlson -- all were in favor.

The regional approval hearing was closed, and the hearing on Energy Compliance was then opened.

Irene discussed the purpose of the enhanced energy standards and the process for certification of local energy plans. Because the updated Energy Chapter of NVDA's Regional Plan has received certification by the Department of Public Service, the NVDA is authorized to review municipal plans in the region for energy compliance. The NVDA uses the Energy Planning Standards checklist developed by the Department of Public Service in reviewing municipal plans for energy compliance. Irene noted that based on the checklist, the Town of Morgan's Plan was found to meet the enhanced energy planning standards.

Irene explained that a board decision is not necessary for energy compliance, that staff review using the checklist is the basis for the decision on energy compliance. A certificate is issued by the executive director of NVDA.

Existing solar projects in Morgan were discussed by those in attendance, as well as the local target for energy generation assigned by NVDA based on the Town's population. The Planning Commission thanked NVDA Senior Planner, Alison Low, for her assistance in updating the energy plan.

The Energy Compliance Hearing was closed at about 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Nagle