

Shaftsbury Planning Commission

Regular meeting Wednesday May 31, 2023

In person at Cole Hall and remotely via the platform Zoom

1) Call to order

The meeting came to order at 6:02 p.m. Present were commissioners Naomi Miller (chair), Mike Foley, Nancy Burns, Chris Williams, and Martha Cornwell. Also present was zoning administrator Shelly Stiles.

2) Approval of minutes

Mr. Foley moved to approve the May 10 minutes. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

3) Public comments

There were none.

4) Review, draft BCRC presentation, enhanced energy plan data analysis

Ms. Miller asked commissioners to respond to the draft powerpoint point: what questions did they have and what additional information is needed.

- How much electricity does Shaftsbury consume presently? Having that information could help us learn how much more we are going to need to generate, with and without the Freeport Solar project, and could help us negotiate with Freeport or the PUC for rebates for Shaftsbury customers.
- Do the graphs show projections or goals?
- Demographics should be included in the analysis. With the push for additional affordable housing, we could see more households in the future (if not more houses). We need to make guesses about the future in order to be able to plan for it.
- Where is the decrease in energy use coming from? Total increases in energy sources are far less than the decrease in energy use. For example, are heat pumps to be responsible for the reduction in the use of heating oil and propane?
- Replace bar graphs with pie charts and provide percentages for each item illustrated, to enable easier comparisons.
- Any projections beyond 2025 are wishful thinking on the state's part.
- Let's analyze goals, not projections.
- What incentives can be offered and why and how?
- While this may be "the state's plan," we're attempting to create it at the behest of townsfolk.
- Re industrial energy use, why so much electric use? Is that claim accurate? Do we have incentives to encourage industrial use of solar, e.g. at the old Stanley Tools plant.
- Roof-top solar arrays would seem appropriate for industrial facilities and could make a big impact.
- Re page 18, total private rooftop solar potential is the issue, not how much energy each house could produce. Provide a pie chart showing potential residential and potential industrial. Is 2392 MWh our potential, and over what period? Month? Year?
- What role does conservation play in the big picture? Please depict it.
- Ask Janet to explain state-imposed vs. town-imposed solar and wind constraints.
- Why are we doing this? Because the community asked us to, and to enhance our clout before the PUC.
- Do we have data supporting the changes depicted in the period 2015-2025. We know, for example, that many roof top installations were installed in that period.

- On page 17, double check the legend. And what do the purple blobs depict?
- Re page 22, ask Janet if we should bother pursuing wind power. (But remember that microturbine technology could improve, and large buffers wouldn't be needed for them.) Or should we outright prohibit wind?
- Create a slide showing where we want to get to.
- Create a map showing where new resources could go.
- The goal of the enhanced energy plan should be to show where we want to site power sources to cover our projected long-term needs.
- Anne Mele, Zooming in from Holy Smoke Road, asked how citizens are to be able to afford improvements such as heat pumps. Michael Algus said the Town needs to negotiate with the developers.

5) Other business

Mr. Foley said he'd called Town of Coxsackie officials to inquire as to what kind of neighbor Freepoint Solar has been there. The town clerk said she'd heard no complaints. Mr. Foley left a message with the code enforcement officer there.

Ms. Cornwell and Ms. Miller will get together to work with Ms. Hurley at BCRC to refine the presentation before the June 14 public meeting on the data.

Mr. Foley will not be available on June 14 but may be able to Zoom in.

Mr. Foley moved to adjourn at 7:12 p.m. Ms. Burns seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.