



MINUTES

September 16, 2021

5:30 PM

BCRC Offices @ 210 South Street, Bennington and
ZOOM Teleconference

Present: Dixie Zens, Nick Zaiac, Donald Campbell, Charlie Rockwell, John LaVecchia, Nancy Faesy,
Sheila Kearns, Dana Rozycki, Janet Hurley
Staff: Jim Sullivan, Callie Fishburn, Jake Gesling

I. Minutes of July 15, 2021 BCRC Meeting

Motion to approve by Steven Bendix. Second by Dixie Zens. Passed unanimously.

II. Public Hearings: Rupert Town Plan

Two public hearings were opened to take comment on the Rupert Town Plan and whether it should be approved by the BCRC under 24 VSA Section 4350 (and the planning process for the town confirmed) and 24 VSA Section 4352 (authorizing a Determination of Energy Compliance). Sullivan described the purpose of each hearing/approval and noted that the Plan has been available for review on the BCRC website and that BCRC staff have completed reviews pursuant to each of the sections noted above and found the Plan to be in compliance. There were no further comments or questions and the hearings were closed. Including those voting at the meeting and ballots received via mail and email, 16 votes were in favor (representing ten municipalities – a majority per statutory requirement) and none were opposed to:

- Approving the Rupert Town Plan pursuant to 24 VSA Section 4350 and confirming the town's planning process and

- Approving a Determination of Energy Compliance, pursuant to 24 VSA Section 4352, for the Rupert Town Plan.

III. Other Business

Sullivan introduced Jake Gesling, BCRC's new VISTA, and welcomed the previous VISTA, Callie Fishburn, as the BCRC's newest full-time staff planner.

The October 13 Housing Conference to be held in Arlington was discussed – information and registration form available on the BCRC's website.

Fishburn and Sullivan reviewed the latest information available about municipal use of ARPA funds and provided a link to the VLCT ARPA webpage. Additional information bulletins and webinars are expected soon as final guidance is released.

Commissioners were interested in the status of the Vermont Climate Council's work in preparing the "Climate Action Plan." Sullivan said that he has been participating in several working groups and stakeholder meetings, especially regarding identification of effective pathways and strategies related to transportation and building thermal sectors. He has been advocating for the type of smart growth, and community development-based approaches outlined in the Bennington County Regional Plan. He noted that because of the need to show significant short-term gains, it appears that the Council is strongly behind actions that could result in a rapid transition to many more electric vehicles and also is looking at further supporting building weatherization efforts. All of the Council's work is being evaluated in terms of both effectiveness at meeting goals and fairness/equity. A draft plan is due in December. There are opportunities for additional public input at upcoming in-person and online meetings (schedule and details available at the Council's website).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 PM