

**Town of Woodbury Planning Commission**  
**December 16, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

**Planning Commission Members Present:** Thomas “Skip” Lindsay-Chair; Michael Gray, Susan Martin

**Town Officials:** Robert Martin-Zoning Administrator; Lister

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM.

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Town Energy Plan Update:**

Skip displayed the “Draft” Town Energy Plan received earlier on the 16<sup>th</sup> from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. Skip noted that the CVRPC have completed their work on the Energy Plan. The Energy Plan was reviewed by the members noting edits by the CVRPC as recommended by the Planning Commission.

All agreed the Energy Plan remains a work in progress as sections of the plan do not seem appropriate given the character of the Town of Woodbury. As an example, the commissioners noted in the Analysis & Targets section, Part 2; 2025, 2035, and 2050 targets for thermal and electric efficiency improvements, and use of renewable energy for transportation, heating and electricity, several tables that outlined goals set for Woodbury based on demographics researched by the CVRPC appear curious. One instance occurs on pages 11-12 of the Plan:

*After weatherization, the next step to increasing home heating efficiency is replacing outdated or inefficient home heating systems with high efficiency units. In general, this conversion would typically include replacing a system that used fossil fuel such as oil with an electric heat pump, wood burning system, or other renewable based heating systems. Specifically, Table 8 identifies the number of new efficient wood heating systems or heat pumps needed in each target year to meet Woodbury's portion of the state's comprehensive energy goals.*

Table 8 Thermal Sector Conversions Per Target Year (Residential and Commercial)			
	2025	2035	2050
New Efficient Wood Heat Systems (in units)	1	0	8
New Heat Pumps (in units)	42	107	204

*This table provides a target for new wood heating systems and new cold climate heat pumps for residential and commercial structures in the municipality for each target year. This target was calculated using data from LEAP and ACS.*

*The Town of Woodbury is significantly forested, and recognizes the importance of supporting the local logging businesses and regional economy. The Town would like to exceed the proposed targets for New Efficient Wood Heat Systems, as these systems would provide a larger benefit to the Town in the energy and economic sectors. The Town will still pursue and support the transition to cold climate heat pumps, but would like to see more new efficient wood heat systems in the future.*

The commissioners agreed that replacing inefficient woodburning heat systems is an attainable and noble goal. However, installation of Heat Pumps in the numbers expressed in Table 8 are unrealistic. The commissioners will edit Table 8 and others as required before presenting the plan to the voters.

Here's the document link on the Woodbury Website: <https://www.woodburyvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/12.13.19-Woodbury-Energy-Plan-Draft.pdf>

The Planning Commission welcomes and appreciates all input and participation in editing the Energy Plan and rewriting the Town Plan by those folks in Woodbury who desire to do so.

### **Town Plan Development:**

Skip Lindsay displayed an email from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development regarding the 2020 Municipal Planning Grant award. Regrettably, Woodbury's grant application, along with numerous other applications, was denied. Here's part of the email from the DHCD:

*The Department of Housing and Community Development received more Municipal Planning Grant applications than could be funded this year, grant requests totaled over \$825,000 for an available \$468,552. Unfortunately, many worthy projects could not be funded, including yours. While we were unable to fund your project in this round, you can keep up to date on new grant opportunities and initiatives by subscribing to our newsletter. Our funding directory provides a comprehensive list of grant programs and funding sources for your planning efforts.*

The grant application specified a total project cost of \$9,585.00. Woodbury would be required to appropriate \$959.00 in matching funds and the CVRPC would receive the remainder of the grant monies to create the town plan.

Skip reported he sent an email to the DHCD noting our disappointment and asked if Woodbury's application was deficient in any way. Nothing in reply from the DHCD to date.

The commissioners debated if researching and writing the town plan was an undertaking that possibly could be accomplished in house. Skip displayed an electronic version of the Elmore Town Plan for discussion. The commissioners noted the Elmore Town Plan was well written and easy to understand.

All agreed to read the Elmore Plan and report at the January 20, 2020 meeting as to whether writing Woodbury's Town Plan is a task they want to assume.

Other options were discussed including reapplying for a DHCD Municipal Planning Grant (if available) or placing an article in the Town Meeting Warning asking the voters to appropriate enough funds to enable the CVRPC to write the plan.

### **Proposed Changes to the Zoning Ordinance**

Susan Martin distributed a draft of a new Zoning Permit Application modeled after the one Hardwick utilizes.

A discussion followed and the group agreed the Zoning Permit Application draft is in need of additional research to ensure its compliance with Vermont State Statutes. Susan agreed to undertake the research and report back to the group at the January 20, 2020 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.

### **Next Meeting:**

6:00 PM January 20, 2020 at the Community Room in the Woodbury Town Library.