

Town of Berkshire

Chartered in 1781

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE PLANNING COMMISSION

Unapproved minutes of November 15, 2022

Present: Walter Elander, Joshua Grims, Jay Tremblay, Russell Ford Absent: Kristine Koch, Margo Sherwood, Claude Charron Special Guests: Emily Klofft (NWRPC), Nancy Patch (Franklin-Grand Isle Co. Forester)

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Walter Elander.

Reviewed the draft minutes from the last meeting on 10/26/22.

Motion: Russ Ford proposed a motion to approve the minutes as documented. Motion seconded by Jay Tremblay. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Discussed PC attendance can be impacted by seasonal travel plans. Revisited that commission had previously discussed establishing co-chair to maintain continuity.

Motion: Russ Ford proposed a motion to appoint Walter Elander as co-chair of Berkshire Planning Commission. Josh Grims seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Discussed planned agenda:

- 1) Discuss with Nancy Patch the Berkshire Town Forest Management Report she has prepared. Follow up discussion regarding application for a Municipal Planning Grant.
 - 2) Follow up discussion of Bellevue RNG/Pleasant Valley Farms and Amanda St. Pierre's request for Planning Commission (PC) letter of approval for their proposed methane digester, refiner and pipeline project waiver of 45 day review period.
 - 3) Discuss with Emily Klofft upcoming activity from the NWRPC to review and update the Hazard Mitigation plan for Berkshire.
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- 1) Town Forest Management Report & Planning Grant
 - Reviewed with Nancy report prepared, findings from forest reconnaissance & inventory.
 - Discussed opportunities for the forest, observations and ideas.

- Russ and Walter shared update regarding planning grant at select board.
- Emily shared memorandum summarizing municipal planning grant proposal and information supporting.
- Walter will plan to bring to back to select board on the 21st. Nancy will plan to attend as well.

2) Amanda St. Pierre request; general discussion regarding project.

- Reviewed letter from Tarrant Gillies & Shems representing Bellevue RNG dated November 8, 2022
- Discussed Vermont Public Utility Commission section 248 process.

Motions made regarding this item:

Motion: Russ Ford proposed a motion that the co-chair (Walter) draft a letter on behalf of the PC supporting the project proposed by Bellevue and requesting the Public Utility Commission hold a public hearing. Motion seconded by Jay Tremblay. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Motion: Jay Tremblay proposed a motion not to waive the 45 day review period by Public Utility Commission. Motion seconded by Walter Elander. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Motion: Russ Ford proposed a motion reflecting the PC decision not to take action on letters proposed by Tarrant Gillies/Bellevue. Josh Grims seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

3) Review of Hazard Mitigation Planning:

- Emily presented that NWRPC will be working to update the Berkshire plan from 2017.
- Reviewed general approach, process and benefits to town.
- Anticipate team will be active with draft as early as December.

Discussed the next PC meeting will be January 11, 2022, at 6 pm. Lindsey Wight of Mississquoi River Basin Association will be invited to attend.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:50 PM by Russ, seconded by Jay and approved by all.

Respectfully recorded and submitted by Joshua Grims.