

## TOWN OF SUTTON

### MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION

A public hearing before the Sutton Planning Commission was held via Zoom **December 21, 2020 at 6 pm** to hear comments about the proposed amendment to the Energy Section of the Sutton Town Plan.

Irene Nagle, NVDA Senior Planner hosted the hearing. Darlene Ahrens chaired the hearing. Hank Parker and Paul Brouha participated (Martha Tack tried to join but had technical difficulties). A quorum was declared.

It was noted the proposed amendment is designed to achieve the enhanced energy planning criteria mandated by Act 174 and by virtue of that to qualify Sutton for “substantial deference” as detailed in the Act. The proposal would not change the designation of any land area and over the long-term would only contribute to the compact and denser development in the village area. It may also contribute to lower overall densities in Sutton’s working lands as envisioned in the Town Plan and, by reducing the auto-dependency of Sutton residents by promoting remote, home-based work strategies, reduce transportation fuel use.

After initial greetings and at the request of Irene, Darlene read the Goals and Objectives Sections. It was agreed two objectives added by the Energy Committee last spring had been previously overlooked and should be added. Darlene continued by summarizing each section of the amendment and describing what had been changed from the existing Energy Section based on the briefing given to the Sutton Selectboard at its regular October meeting.

In response to an objection raised at that meeting by Chair Tim Simpson, an item on page 20 of the Implementation Section had been changed from “Establish town policies...” to “Hand out information and establish processes...” Further, Hank asked Irene if the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) recently passed into law by the Vermont Legislature would affect Sutton’s Energy Plan. She responded that, while implementation of the GWSA is still being worked out, Sutton’s proposed amendment “was on the right track” and exceeded current requirements. Finally, Paul detailed the need to better inform Sutton residents about energy incentives and programs through a quarterly newsletter available on Sutton’s website and advertised on Front Porch Forum and other media. Hank asked if a regional approach and solutions would be highlighted (e.g., where to learn about the expanding network of electrical vehicle charging stations, comparison of costs of pellets and other fuels to lower and stabilize prices, and gleaning information from other municipalities and the state). Irene agreed that collaboration would be good and said she would speak with her NVDA colleague Alison Low about it.

Respectfully submitted, Paul Brouha

Sutton Planning Commission

Sutton Vermont

December 24, 2020