

Shaftsbury Planning Commission
September 26, 2017

- 1) The special meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were commissioners Chris Williams (chair), Mike Foley, and Mike Cichanowski. Jim Sullivan, executive director of the Bennington County Regional Commission, and Shelly Stiles, zoning administrator, were also present.
- 2) Mr. Foley moved to approve the 8/22/17 minutes. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.
- 3) Mr. Williams moved to “other business” to report on the Iron Kettle. Contrary to manager Brian Lent’s belief, the Act 250 coordinator and the DEC Permit Assistance Specialist for the area report that a Town-approved change of use decision for the motel would not trigger the need for an Act 250 application. The commission agreed that the zoning bylaw does not allow the existing use, something akin to a dorm, and wondered if the PC should address that issue. Mr. Cichanowski said it could help the Town get ahead of what will likely be additional changes at the remaining Rt. 7A motels. Jim Sullivan said he’d ask Housing and Community Development, and the Bennington Zoning Administrator.
- 4) Regional energy plan

Mr. Sullivan gave an overview of what would need to be contained in a municipal energy plan. He said such local plans would need to be submitted to the BCRC for review. Dorset and Sunderland have begun developing such plans.

He shared several handouts on how to make an Act 174-compliant plan, which are incorporated by reference in these minutes. Most of what is to be contained in the plan are things over which the Town has no or little control. An exception, and an issue the PC would need to address, is that of “how much energy can we generate and where should those generation facilities be located?” Mr. Sullivan noted that the Town can identify its own “preferred sites,” defined by law as gravel pits, paved areas, brownfields and others, and totaling about 50-60 acres minimum. Developers in those sites can receive bonuses of some kind.

Such a plan needn’t be longer than 12-15 pages plus maps. Mr. Sullivan would be glad to help the PC develop the plan, which might take about six months.

Citizen Jeff Kauper contributed several comments.
- 5) Country store

Mr. Cichanowski shared a draft of the report he and Mr. Williams have been working on for the Select Board. Mr. Williams asked that it be shortened. Mr. Cichanowski reported that all his case studies portray extensive public support, something Shaftsbury can’t provide. Both Mr. Cichanowski and Mr. Williams believe the market for something like a country store is absent in S. Shaftsbury, with the Market Wagon and Paulin’s nearby. Mr. Cichanowski noted that all three subject properties would require significant capital investment.
- 6) Site visits

A field trip to Shaftsbury Town Forest was scheduled for Oct. 3, 5p. Meet near 350 Blueberry Hill Rd. The ZA will warn the meeting.

It was agreed that Mr. Williams would ask Dailey’s if a visit to their plant on Friday October 20 at 10a will work.

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 8:40 pm.