

NVDA Wind Study Committee – Meeting #4 – 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 24, 2013 – Barton Town Office

In attendance: Jim Greenwood (NVDA – Committee Chair), Dave Snedeker (NVDA – Committee Staff), Farley Brown (Craftsbury- Committee), Robert Croteau (Barton - Committee), Peter Rodin (NVDA Board and UTG Representative), Billy Coster (VT Agency of Natural Resources)

The meeting was opened at 6:30 p.m. by D. Snedeker. Welcome and introductions made.

D. Snedeker discussed: NVDA Board Resolution recommending suspension of industrial-scale wind for further study; formation of NVDA Study Committee and development of outline; invitations to experienced speakers/representatives by Committee to inform study.

B. Coster (ANR) discussed:

ANR is statutory party in PSB proceedings

- Required to give evidence and recommendations
- Ensure that developments of all types have the least amount of impact on natural resources
- “Undue adverse impact” is the bar that has to be reached to stop a project

ANR developed in 2006 draft guidelines for review of energy generation projects

- Developers describe projects and discuss impacts
- New guidelines are coming soon (possibly, Summer 2013)

ANR makes contact with a developer when they hear of a project

- ANR meets with applicant(s), ANR supports early notification
- Section 246 process used for MET towers – ANR has viewed these as having minimal impacts for projects to date

Public Service Department has been supportive of towns that do not want wind projects. [ANR does provide testimony to the PSB regarding a project’s compliance with town or regional plans, ANR position regarding wind projects is limited to the natural resource criteria articulated in Sec. 248.](#)

The newest Governor’s Siting Commission Report is due to be released on 4/30/2013

ANR’s effectiveness in PSB Section 248 decisions?

- B. Coster - ANR has been a strong advocate of their positions on wind projects, but the PSB doesn’t listen as much as ANR would like. ANR treats industrial wind as it would with any high elevation development. The bar of ‘undue adverse impact’ is very hard to meet.
- ANR is compiling information for the proposed Seneca Mountain Wind project (Newark, Brighton, Ferdinand) – public investments \$ made, conserved lands, habitats, etc.
- ANR doesn’t testify on aesthetics (Public Service Dept. typically does)
- ANR uses independent studies to help inform their recommendations - they often question the person(s) who put together the study
- ANR follows up on natural resource recommendations in the decisions, and also mitigation measures
- ANR can curtail development activities during certain times of the year

- Developers typically hire the consultants. ANR works with these consultants to set up studies, develop methodologies, etc.

ANR is in the process of putting all of the 'large' projects up onto their website

Maine has done a study on the cumulative visual impacts of industrial wind

CPGs are often issued before all ANR permits have been issued (unlike Act 250). ANR and PSD are saying that all permit applications should be filed before or simultaneous with the CPG application.

Unexpected impacts from projects to date? B. Coster - The difference in the amount of earth/site work at Lowell (KCW project) vs. Sheffield (FirstWind project) was significant. There were many more blasting and clearing issues for the Lowell project

Invasive species impacts? B. Coster – Unsure of any plans/studies to look at these potential impacts

Next meeting date set for 6:30 p.m. March 15, 2013 at the Barton Town Office.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Minutes by D. Snedeker