

## Duxbury Planning Commission

### Meeting Minutes August 14, 2014

Members present: Erica Campbell, Kim Greenwood, Brian T. Fitzgerald

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m. by Brian Fitzgerald.

**Agenda Changes:** Add discussion of Class 4 roads to end of meeting.

**Minutes:** On motion by Kim/Erica, the minutes of the July 10, 2014 meeting were approved as written.

**GMP Substation:** As discussed at a previous meeting, Green Mountain Power is proposing to replace the existing substation on Winooski Street in Waterbury with a new facility adjacent to the Noyes development at the State Farm. During the pre-application review last spring, the Planning Commission identified three issues: the location of the stormwater detention basin (right at the edge of the Crossett Brook buffer), screening of the facility (particularly on the south side) and the proliferation of overhead powerlines.

GMP filed its application for a Certificate of Public Good with the Public Service Board (PSB) on June 17. The application shows the stormwater detention basin is within the newly-mapped fluvial erosion hazard area, which is a significant concern. On the plus side, the application shows the addition of vegetative screening on the south side and privacy slats in the fencing on the south and west sides. Further, some of the overhead powerlines are now buried.

On August 4, the PSB held a pre-hearing conference, which Brian attended. At the conference, Brian discussed the Planning Commission's concerns with ANR's attorney and learned that the Agency has similar concerns, so we will be working with the Agency to have our concerns addressed.

Commission members reviewed a draft letter to the PSB outlining our concerns and decided to send the letter on behalf of the Town. The final letter is attached to these minutes. Kim Greenwood will attend the site visit and public hearing for the project on September 17.

**Town Plan:** Brian forwarded the final draft plan and report to Selectboard members on August 1. He attended the August 11 board meeting and discussed the review schedule with the board. The next step in the process is a Selectboard public hearing, scheduled for October 13. No action by the Planning Commission is needed prior to the hearing. The draft plan will soon be posted on the Planning Commission page on the town website.

**Class 4 Roads:** There was a brief discussion of the Class 4 road issue that has been discussed at the last few Selectboard meetings, but the Commission took no action.

**Next Meeting:** The September 11 Planning Commission meeting is cancelled. The next scheduled meeting of the Commission is October 9, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in the town garage meeting room.

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Minutes by B.T. Fitzgerald

Town of  
Duxbury, Vermont  
Planning Commission  
5421 Vermont Route 100  
Duxbury, Vermont 05676

August 15, 2014

Susan M. Hudson, Clerk  
Vermont Public Service Board  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2701

RE: Petition of Green Mountain Power Corp. – New Substation in Duxbury  
Docket No. 8308  
Comments on Application

Dear Ms. Hudson:

I am writing to offer comments on the above-referenced project. The Duxbury Planning Commission reviewed preliminary information supplied by Green Mountain Power (GMP) during the 45-day pre-application review period. Following our review, we engaged in a dialogue with GMP on the issues described below.

**Stormwater Detention Pond:** During our initial review, we questioned the location of the stormwater detention basin, which the preliminary plans showed to be located on the edge of the 50-foot stream buffer. The plans also indicated that the structure is a component of the Act 250 approved Noyes development that is underway on the property. Subsequent investigation revealed that the Act 250 approved location of the structure is the site of the proposed substation, so the detention basin was moved closer to Crossett Brook on the substation site plan.

The plans submitted with the GMP application (Exhibit GMP-JRF 2) show that the detention basin has been slightly redesigned but that most of the structure is within the fluvial erosion hazard area. Maintaining the integrity of the fluvial erosion hazard area is a high priority for the Town, so the stormwater detention structure should be redesigned and relocated outside of the erosion hazard area. We understand that the Agency of Natural Resources has also identified this as a problem and notified GMP that the structure must be redesigned. We will work with the Agency and GMP toward an acceptable solution.

**Aesthetics:** This will be a substantial facility located along a heavily traveled highway, so aesthetics is an important consideration. Further, it will be highly visible from the Crossett Brook Middle School. Existing vegetation that will remain in place will provide some screening from the highway. During our initial review, we requested that vegetation be planted along the south side of the facility to provide screening from the school, and the application indicates that plantings will be included. The plans also show that “privacy slats” will be incorporated into the fencing on the south and west sides to provide further screening of the equipment within the perimeter fence.

Susan Hudson  
August 15, 2014  
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The preliminary plans also showed the addition of three new overhead distribution circuits from the substation to the highway and then along the highway to an existing distribution line. While there are two transmission lines and at least one distribution line already in the area, we requested that the new distribution lines be buried to avoid a proliferation of overhead utility lines in this area. The plans included with the application show that some of the lines will be buried and the extent of new overhead lines reduced.

The Public Service Department has commissioned an analysis to determine the aesthetic impacts of the project and has offered to share that analysis with the Town of Duxbury when it is available. We will reserve further comment on aesthetics until we have reviewed the report.

The town has not made a final decision with respect to filing a motion to intervene. We will make that decision once we have more information about how GMP intends to address the issues noted above.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Fitzgerald". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Brian T. Fitzgerald, Chair  
Duxbury Planning Commission

c: Richard Charland, Chair, Duxbury Selectboard  
Duxbury Planning Commission  
Don Einhorn, Agency of Natural Resources  
Jeanne Elias, Public Service Department  
Debra Bouffard, Sheehey Furlong & Behm