



**IREC Steering Committee Meeting
October 7, 2021**

Present: Elizabeth Ferry, Linda Gray, Erica Ko, Nancy Jones, Ryan Haac, David Lutz, Geoff Martin

1. Additions/changes to the agenda

The committee agreed to have a rotating minute-taker so that the responsibility doesn't fall on Elizabeth every time. Ryan requested an exemption from being the minute taker.

Geoff added an overview of Elizabeth's conversation with Green Mountain Power and a discussion of submitting comments to the Climate Council to the agenda.

2. IREC Climate Action Plan

Elizabeth suggested changing the name of the Climate Action Plan to distinguish between the State and Regional plans. The rest of the group felt that it should be a Climate Action Plan to indicate that there are multiple levels of levels of climate action.

Erica suggested structuring the document like Alice in Thetford – creating a table with the left column showing strategies and the right column showing actions. The group agreed that a table is the best format, and can show the timeline with responsible parties as well as strategies and actions. Linda suggested that the Norwich town plan is a good example.

Linda highlighted the importance of distinguishing between things that town bodies can do (e.g., zoning regulations), which are more actionable than actions that require convincing residents. There could be three categories – municipal actions that impact the public, municipal actions that affect municipal operations, and actions that persuade residents.

Erica proposed asking the voters to adopt the plan at town meeting. Some felt that it would be hard to convey the information to voters at Town Meeting. Others felt that it could be done by distributing just the table or an Executive Summary. There was a question about how this plan would differ from many Energy Chapters in Town Plans. Linda suggested that each Steering Committee member could review the table to see how much of it matches with their Town Plan.

Actions: Geoff will refine the plan and create the action table, which he will send to the Steering Committee no later than a week before the November meeting. The Committee will review the plan with their Energy Committees in November/December. The Committee will also compare the plan to their Town Plans to identify actions that already exist in the Town Plan and those that are not in their Town Plans.

2. Updates

a) Meeting with legislators

Elizabeth went to the Bethel Forward event and met Robert Dostis and Kristen Kelly from GMP. Robert asked why would Barnard install more solar when GMP is largely carbon free and renewable. Robert

suggested that instead, the state needs to focus on resiliency (i.e., solar plus storage in key locations). GMP is unwilling to have a genuine conversation about the REC issue. The committee acknowledged that it is not worth talking to GMP in the future. Linda suggested that there are many others in the state that are concerned about the attack on in-state renewables, and that there is talk about the need to reform the PUC.

b) HERS

Erica explained that the proposal to require HERS is stalled because it's not clear that municipalities have the authority to restrict compliance with RBES to HERS. Erica and Geoff have met with the Chittenden County RPC to develop a proposed amendment to the statute to enable municipalities to require a HERS rating. Erica sent the language to Tim Briglin, with hopes of getting a legal review. CCRPC and potentially TRORC are submitting comments on this topic to the Climate Council.

Action: Erica will nudge Tim a week before meeting with legislators if he doesn't respond before then.

c) Planning for next year

Geoff noted that the ACCD funding for energy implementation will be used to lower the amount of the second invoice for IREC towns. The funding has to be used for staff time to support implementation projects, so TRORC cannot use it as a small grant to support physical projects. The funding must also be used in FY 22, so it cannot be rolled over to FY 23. Towns may use the savings from the discounted invoice however they like.

d) Climate Council Comments

Geoff said that it would be inappropriate for the IREC group to submit comments to the Climate Council, given the need for Selectboard approval. Steering Committee members may submit comments as individuals. Linda mentioned that 350 VT and the Vermont Climate Coalition put together comments that steering committee members could sign on to. Energy committees can submit comments. If anyone drafts something, circulate it to the group. Linda will pass along the one from the ct climate coalition. s

Action: Linda will circulate the 350 VT and Vermont Climate Coalition letters to the group. Any Steering Committee member or Energy Committee that writes a comment will circulate the comment to the rest of the Steering Committee.