

1 PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

2 Wednesday, October 9, 2024

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4 The meeting of the Project Review Committee was held remotely. Chair H. Garrett called the meeting to order  
5 at 6:02 PM.

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7 ATTENDANCE:

8 Commission: Scholten, Marietta  ; Demars, Howard ; Buermann, Robert ; Irwin, William ; Garrett,  
9 Harold ; Neal Speer ; Julian Callan ; Yvon Dandurand ;

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11 Staff: Emily Klofft.

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13 Guests: Jim Muir (Agricultural Digesters-Bullis Savage View Farm, LLC)

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15 **Changes or Additions to the Agenda:**

16 H. Garrett moved the approval of meeting minutes to the end of the agenda.

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18 **Public Comment**

19 None.

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22 **Project Reviews:**

23 **Section 248- Bullis Savage View Farm, LLC**

24 *Project Details:* 150 kW electric generation facility utilizing methane and other greenhouse gases derived  
25 from agricultural operations (“farm methane”)

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27 E. Klofft reminded the Committee of their review at the 45-day notice, when they had noted two potential  
28 concerns: sound impacts from the generator and ensuring that the Fire Department had training on the  
29 facility.

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31 J. Muir reviewed the noise study for the biodigester. He stated that proposed location for the generator had  
32 been moved to reduce sounds impacts. With the updated location, the noise is within acceptable levels at the  
33 property line. J. Muir stated he had spoken to the Fire Department and they felt prepared to address any  
34 issues arising with the biodigester.

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36 H. Demars stated that he was glad that the project would reduce the smell impacts of the farm on the school.  
37 H. Garrett noted that other biodigester projects had external fans and asked if the sounds of fans were  
38 included in the noise analysis. J. Muir stated that this project would not have fans.

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40 H. Demars asked what the solid byproducts of the biodigester would be used for. J. Muir stated that a portion  
41 would be used for bedding and the remainder could be sold for compost or peat moss replacement.

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43 J. Muir noted that they have two upcoming projects that are not yet in the permitting process. Having several  
44 projects in the area is part of the strategy to make it easier for repairs and services to be provided. One is the  
45 Machia Farm in Sheldon which will provide 100% of the fuel from local manure, and the other is the Machia  
46 Brothers Farm in Franklin which will consist of a mix of manure and beer waste.

1 The Committee reviewed the definition of substantial regional impact.

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3 *B. Irwin motioned to find that the Bullis Savage View Farm, LLC project is in conformance with the Regional*  
4 *Plan and not of substantial regional impact. H. Demars seconded. The motion carried.*  
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6 **Act 250- Bernard Martel Berkshire Bar & Gardens LLC**

7 *Projects Details:* Conversion of the upper level of an existing post & beam horse barn and improvements  
8 to surrounding lands for use as a seasonal (May-October) wedding and events venue at an existing small  
9 farm with up to fourteen (14) total events per year.  
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11 E. Klofft reviewed the project materials and site plan. The project is the change of use of an existing horse barn  
12 into a wedding and event venue. The project will not include EV chargers, but with the exception of the ADA  
13 spots, all of the parking spots are in an open field. The project is located in a rural area. There are 14 events  
14 permitted from 1 PM-11 PM, with outdoor music only allowed for wedding ceremonies while wedding  
15 reception music will only be allowed in the barn. Portable toilets and handwashing stations will be used. The  
16 project will have a 148 person maximum capacity with an estimated 89 cars. E. Klofft reviewed the sound  
17 study, the sound level is below 40 dB at the property line even when the barn door is open.  
18

19 The Committee discussed potential emergency response times and capacity to address an event. B. Buermann  
20 noted that in a past project, the Committee had a concern about potential food sanitation without permanent  
21 water. B. Irwin stated that he had reached out to the relevant staff at the Health Department and that the  
22 porta-facilities were considered adequate.  
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24 The Committee noted that the number of these facilities was increasing overall, and it would be good to  
25 better understand the overall impact. H. Demars noted a potential concern is whether alcohol is required to  
26 be provided by a licensed provider, as without this things could more easily get out of hand. B. Buermann  
27 noted that it was good that this venue had a defined size limit.  
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29 *H. Demars motioned to find that project is in conformance with the Regional Plan and not of substantial*  
30 *regional impact. B. Buermann seconded. The motion carried.*  
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33 **Section 248 Reservoir Road Solar, LLC/2.375 MW- Berkshire**

34 *Project Details:* 45 day notice for a 2.375 MW solar project.  
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36 E. Klofft reviewed the site plan and project materials. The project is a 2.375 MW solar project of roughly 11  
37 acres located on the parcel next to the well for the Enosburg Falls water supply.  
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39 H. Demars asked if there was anything in the solar panels that could contaminate the water source. B. Irwin  
40 stated that it was unlikely that the solar panels itself would cause issues, the main concern would be metals  
41 but the solar panels are designed to withstand significant physical trauma. B. Buermann stated that he would  
42 be concerned that vegetation management could cause contamination. The Committee discussed potential  
43 concerns with the location close to the wellhead and developed a list of questions:

- 44 • What impact could the solar project have on the watershed to the reservoir?
- 45 • Will there be transformers or other project elements with the potential for run-off in or near the well  
46 and reservoir?

- Will there be a decommissioning plan for the project?
- What protections will be put in place to address potential contamination from the construction equipment and vehicles on the site?
- How will vegetation around the project site be controlled?

**Section 248: Peggy and David Howrigan/100 kW small wind in Fairfield**

*Project Details: 100 kW wind system with four turbines, each with a tower of 100'.*

E. Klofft reviewed the applicant's response to discovery and noted that the next step was to submit comments. H. Demars stated that he continued to be concerned about sound impacts. B. Irwin stated that he felt the turbines were shocking and offensive to the reasonable person. The Committee agreed that the previous comment letter should be submitted.

**Staff Reviews**

**Act 250: March Lareau**

E. Klofft reviewed the application. The project is an outdoor seasonal storage facility for RVs and campers, located adjacent to the applicant's self-storage facility. The project is located in St. Albans Town, next to the municipal garage. E. Klofft stated that she had noted that prime agricultural soils were on site, and that mitigation would likely be required by the Agency of Agriculture. The project is not of substantial regional impact in the opinion of staff.

*B. Irwin motioned to allow staff to review the project. H. Demars seconded. The motion carried.*

**Act 250: Vermont State Parks, Northwest Region**

E. Klofft reviewed the application. The project is the addition of pickleball courts and ADA access to the beach. The pickleball courts are located well away from neighboring residences to prevent sound impact. E. Klofft noted that the applicant originally stated the project was not in the floodplain, but the ADA access point will be in the floodplain, although it is unlikely to have a significant negative impact. The applicant had agreed that it was in the floodplain. The project is not of substantial regional impact in the opinion of staff.

The Committee noted the positive of adding ADA accessibility to the beach.

*H. Demars motioned to allow staff to review the project. B. Irwin seconded. The motion carried.*

**Act 250: Michael McGuiness and Anne Marie McGuiness Revocable Trust**

E. Klofft reviewed the application. The project is an after-the-fact permitting of additional camping sites for an RV campground. The main concern is the presence of wetlands on the site. The applicants will be applying for wetlands permit to address this concern. The project is not of substantial regional impact in the opinion of staff.

B. Buermann noted that he had assisted his brother with the surveying work on this site, although he was not involved in the permit application and therefore did not have a conflict of interest that required recusing himself.

*H. Demars motioned to allow staff to review the project. B. Irwin seconded. The motion carried.*

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**Act 250: Sandy Birch Road, LLC**

E. Klofft reviewed the application. The project is the addition of natural gas lines to the previously reviewed housing projects. The gas lines are being extended along the new roadway and are not crossing the wetlands area. The project is not of substantial regional impact in the opinion of staff.

*H. Demars motioned to allow staff to review the project. B. Irwin seconded. The motion carried.*

**Minutes**

*B. Buermann motioned to approve the minutes of the July meeting. B. Irwin seconded. The motion carried with 2 abstentions.*

**Updates**

The Committee and staff discussed the meeting time and date. It was decided that for now, the meeting would remain on the second Wednesday, since the Committee can make quorum on this date.

**Commissioner Announcements**

None.

**Adjourn**

*B. Irwin motioned to adjourn. The motion carried. The Committee adjourned at 7:37 PM.*

