

Northwest Regional Planning Commission

24 V.S.A. §4352 Determination for the Municipality of Highgate

Determination of Energy Planning Compliance Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4352 For Highgate's Town Plan

I. Introduction

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission ("NRPC") Board of Commissioners have issued the attached certificate memorializing the affirmative determination pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4352 that the Highgate Town Plan complies with the requirements of 24 V.S.A. §4352 for enhanced energy planning. This determination is made solely as to whether the Highgate Town Plan complies with the statutory planning requirements of 24 V.S.A. §4352. The following is a summary of procedural history of the plan, public comments received during the hearing on determination of energy compliance, and conclusions of the NRPC Board of Commissioners.

II. Procedural History

1. On December 21, 2017, the Town of Highgate Selectboard duly adopted an amendment to the Highgate Town Plan to incorporate an enhanced energy plan.
2. On December 22, 2017, the Town of Highgate submitted the Highgate Town Plan to the Northwest Regional Planning Commission ("NRPC") for a determination of compliance with the enhanced energy planning standards set forth in 24 V.S.A. §4352.
3. On January 8, 2018, notice of a public hearing scheduled for January 29, 2018 was posted on NRPC's website.
4. On January 8, 2018, notice of a public hearing scheduled for January 29, 2018 was mailed directly to the Town of Highgate.

5. On January 10, 2018, notice of a public hearing scheduled for January 29, 2018 was published in the St. Albans Messenger.
6. On January 29, 2018, NRPC's Plan Review Committee convened a public hearing at the NRPC Office located at 75 Fairfield Street in St. Albans, Vermont. After the public hearing, the Plan Review Committee recommended that the Highgate Plan receive a determination of energy planning compliance with the enhanced energy planning standards set forth in 24 V.S.A. §4352.
7. On January 31, 2018, NRPC's Board of Commissioners reviewed the recommendation of the Plan Review Committee and voted to issue a determination of energy planning compliance pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4352 for the Highgate Town Plan.

III. Public Comments

Three members of the public attended the public hearing on the Highgate Town Plan Determination of Energy Compliance on January 29, 2018. The public hearing was held by the NRPC Plan Review Committee. Members of the public in attendance included the Highgate Town Administrator and two Regional Commissioners that are members of the Regional Energy Committee. All spoke in favor of the Highgate Town Plan meeting the requirements for a determination of energy compliance. Public comments were mostly in regards to trying to understand how the Highgate Town Plan was developed and public involvement in the plan development process. The representative from Highgate noted municipal officials' and public's desire to have a plan that received substantial deference before the Public Utility Commission.

IV. Conclusions

1. The Highgate Town Plan includes an energy element that has the same components as described in 24 V.S.A. §4348a(a)(3) for a regional plan and is confirmed under the requirements of 24 V.S.A. §4350.

2. The Highgate Town is consistent with following State goals:
 - A. Vermont's greenhouse gas reduction goals under 10 V.S.A. § 578(a);
 - B. Vermont's 25 by 25 goal for renewable energy under 10 V.S.A. § 580;
 - C. Vermont's building efficiency goals under 10 V.S.A. § 581;
 - D. State energy policy under 30 V.S.A. § 202a and the recommendations for regional and municipal energy planning pertaining to the efficient use of energy and the siting and development of renewable energy resources contained in the State energy plans adopted pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 202 and 202b (State energy plans); and
 - E. The distributed renewable generation and energy transformation categories of resources to meet the requirements of the Renewable Energy Standard under 30 V.S.A. §§ 8004 and 8005.

3. The Highgate Town Plan meets the standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance included in the State energy plans as developed by the Vermont Department of Public Service.

Dated at St. Albans City, Vermont this 31st day of January 2018.



Robert Buermann, Chair
Northwest Regional Planning Commission

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Certificate of Energy Compliance

On this 31st day of January, 2018, Northwest Planning Commission determined that the Highgate Town Plan, duly adopted on July 23, 2015, and as amended on December 21, 2017, complies with the energy planning requirements set forth in 24 V.S.A. §4352 and is consistent with the Northwest Regional Plan.

Dated at St. Albans City, Vermont this 31st day of January 2018.



Robert Buermann, Chair
Northwest Regional Planning Commission