

NH SB99 Energy Facility Siting Project

First Coordinating Committee Meeting

Thursday, September 19 (1:30—4:00)

Location: OEP Conference Room, Johnson Hall, 3rd Floor
107 Pleasant Street, Concord

Meeting Minutes

1:30 Welcome and Coordinating Committee Charge—Meredith Hatfield, OEP

The charge of the Coordinating Committee (CC) is to provide advice and ideas to the consulting team and OEP throughout the project, including on research design, focus group members and process, and citizen workshops. OEP is creating a SB99 webpage to provide information on the project. OEP thanked the CC members for their willingness to devote this time to this project. With such a tight timeline (report due 12/31/13), OEP pointed out that we have a lot of work to do in a short period.

1:35 Introductions of CC Members and Raab/CBI Team

Attending:

- Meredith Hatfield, Brandy Chambers – OEP
- Senator Forrester
- David Shulock, PUC
- Mike Fitzgerald, DES Air Resources; Tim Drew, DES
- Rachel Goldwasser, Attorney for developers (for Doug Patch)
- Susan Arnold, AMC (on the phone)
- Janet Besser, New England Clean Energy Council
- Christophe Courchesne, CLF
- Jeff Hayes, North Country RPC

Unable to attend: Rep. Suzanne Smith and Peter Roth, DOJ Public Counsel

1:45 Overview of Research and Engagement Process

- Presentation of approach (research, focus groups, and citizen engagement workshops)-- Dr. Jonathan Raab (see attachment)
- CC members' discussion

The CC discussed the timing of the citizen workshops in the process. The consulting team emphasized that although they are close to the end, they are very important in the overall process, and will help shape the final report. The CC suggested that the team make that clear so that the public understands that they will provide key input into the final report. CC members also suggested that at least a couple of sessions should be held in the North Country. OEP said that it is considering holding additional listening sessions to allow for public input, and agreed that there is a high level of interest in these issues in the North Country.

The consulting team clarified that CC members are expected to speak as individuals, which means that CC members are not binding their agency/organization, but instead are helping provide informed input into the process.

The group agreed that we will need to provide CC meeting agendas and as much information as possible to the public through the OEP webpage.

2:00 **Research Design**

- Overview of research design for structure, process, & criteria—Catherine Morris
- Feedback from CC members on research design, outputs, and other states to review.

CC input included:

- Funding—who funds experts (source); how are application fees used?
- What is the relationship of siting committee to other state agencies— do they share staff, is there a right of appeal by individual agencies?
- Role of Counsel—Does it exist? how is it funded?
- How is state policy (e.g. RPS) factored into the decisions? For instance, does a state objective of fuel diversity come into play in the decisions?
- Does the state siting entity have a role in setting broader state energy policy?
- Does siting counsel approval pre-empt local decision making?
- What is the appeals process (what court does it go to and what does it depend on)?
- Do they have different staff in agencies that can negotiate with developers?
- What requirements, if any, do states have around alternative sites or resources?
- Do they evaluate whether there's a public benefit, and if so how (including state , regional, and local benefits)?
- Do noise and/or aesthetic criteria apply to all facilities or only specific ones like wind?
- What's the intervention standard, compared to public comment to SEC? Some people argue that it is difficult to become an intervener in NH.
- What role does discovery play in the adjudicatory proceedings? What information is available, time requirements, etc.
- Do other states use a formal adjudicatory process or some alternative? Is pre-filed testimony required, etc.? What ways have been considered to retain transparency but lower costs?
- What obligations can be put on developer?
- What is authority of SEC to impose conditions?
- Criteria – size of facility relative to the site

2:45 **Focus Group Design and Strategy**

- Focus group buckets and recruitment strategy—Dr. Jonathan Raab
- Feedback from CC members on six groups and recruitment strategy

The CC discussed the proposed Focus Groups and provided suggestions on groups to invite to ensure that a broad range of perspectives is represented.

- The CC recommended that there be a separate wind focus group given the importance and likely prevalence of wind siting cases in the future. (Consultant team agreed to add an additional focus group for wind following the meeting.)
- The CC concurred that the focus groups would cover both the SEC structure/process (Task 1) and the SEC decision making criteria (Task 2).

3:15 **Citizen Engagement Workshops**

- Proposed locations for workshops, and whether to have single (and separate) workshop on process/structure and roll into four criteria workshops—Dr. Jonathan Raab
- Feedback from CC members on locations of meetings, potential sites in those locations, and keeping process/structure separate from criteria workshops or not

The CC agreed that it would be more effective to combine all of the issues (process, structure, criteria) together at the public sessions, but suggested giving greater attention to criteria during the citizen workshops; CC members suggested that citizens are most likely to be interested in process issues around how citizens can get involved in the decision making.

Several members of the CC expressed an interest in having as many citizen workshops as possible in the North Country, but CC members also expressed a concern that too many in one region might skew the results based on the polling data from the meetings.

Suggested locations (or areas): Keene, Central, Seacoast, North Country. The CC suggested starting earlier in the North Country is preferable, latest ending time is 9:00.

Listening sessions hosted by OEP, in addition to the workshops, will provide additional opportunities for the public to weigh in if they are held earlier in the process.

The Team thanked the CC for its time and attention, and said that future meeting dates will be confirmed by email.