



**House and Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committees
Public Service Board Section 248 Permit Process**

Improve the process to achieve results that meet State and local land use goals

Wednesday, January 20, 2016

Through the end of November, according to the Department of Public Service, there were 1461 applications for solar facilities in Vermont, 1215 of them for installations of less than 15 kilowatts (kW). As is illustrated in Exhibit 12-8 of the Comprehensive Energy Plan, we have 4,996 solar sites generating 94,860 kW of electricity. Exhibit 12-13 is a map of wind turbines over 100 kW, of which we have 13 in Vermont. (Both maps are attached.) The Governor told the Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce last week that he expects solar installations will double in 2016. This success in deploying solar and wind certainly moves Vermont toward the goal of 90 percent renewable by 2050. However, it does not serve all people in all situations or areas of the state, which is why you have a State House full of local officials and citizens here today who believe they have been ignored. As we move ahead in deploying energy generation, we need to get the siting process right – now.

Today, there is not a balance between the public good that is renewable and reliable energy production and the public good of thoughtful land use and other priorities on the local level that reflect State goals of compact settlements surrounded by rural countryside.

VLCT's adopted Municipal Policy calls on the legislature to *[e]nsure that Vermont's energy supply remains reliable and that the Public Service Board restores balance between the transition to renewable energy and the protection of land use priorities established in municipal plans and state land use goals.*

Accord automatic party status to affected adjacent municipalities as well as host municipalities in Section 248 proceedings. In the CPG process, the PSB should give "substantial deference" to municipal concerns and determinations. In so doing, the PSB should include all local decisions concerning the project within the PSB docket, formulate areas of inquiry based on concerns raised in the local hearing process, and address concerns raised in local determinations and adopted municipal plans in its CPG decision.

Thank you for taking time this morning to hear from local officials who will tell you how the PSB siting process has worked in their communities.

*Karen Horn, Director
Public Policy and Advocacy*