

Kent County Renewable Energy Task Force  
16 October 2015  
Meeting Summary

The Kent County 2015 Renewable Energy Task Force (RETF) met on Friday, 16 October 2015 at 9:00 am in the Second Floor Conference room in the R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr. Government Center in Chestertown, MD for an initial organizational meeting. The following members attended: David Hill, Bill Cooper, Briggs Cunningham, Janet Lewis, Walter Bowie, and Terry Willis. RETF staff in attendance included Amy G. Moredock, Planning Director, and Katrina L. Tucker, Community Planner.

Ms. Moredock went over the charge from the 2010 RETF, as well as the Task Force's recommendations, and the resulting Zoning Text Amendments (ZTA) adopted in 2011. She noted that the 2011 ZTAs did not include provisions for biomass because it was, and still is, allowed. Biomass is reviewed and permitted through the nutrient management plans. She further noted that provisions for utility scale wind energy were not enacted, as the RETF, the Planning Commission, and the County Commissioners found that the such a use was neither compatible with the County Comprehensive Plan nor the Land Use Ordinance. Utility scale provisions for solar energy were enacted in Industrial, Employment Center, and Commercial Districts. Utility Scale Solar Energy Systems are limited to 5 acres in the Agricultural and Resource Conservation Districts. Small scale wind and solar system provisions (defined as systems installed to provide onsite energy usage) were enacted in most zoning districts.

Ms. Moredock addressed the extent of wind energy systems and solar energy system applications, including pending applications for solar projects. She also mentioned the petition for a ZTA to increase utility scale solar projects in the Agricultural Zoning District (AZD) to 60 acres; and noted that the application is currently tabled rather than withdrawn.

The members also discussed the role of the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN).

Members present concurred with the charge of the 2015 RETF, as follows:

- ☞ Revisit the 2010 studies and recommendations with special attention paid to utility scale systems.
- ☞ Revisit renewable energy industry advancements,
- ☞ Ensure appropriateness and compatibility of existing Ordinance provisions in light of industry advancements, and
- ☞ Propose appropriate policy changes and ordinance amendments, if necessary.

In addition, the Members decided the following:

- ☞ The committee will meet every other Friday at 9:00 a.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room in the R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr. Government Center.
- ☞ The committee will study solar, wind, and biomass/digesters renewable energy (in that order).
- ☞ The committee will review each renewable energy area of focus one at a time.
- ☞ Solar energy will be the first area of focus.
- ☞ Staff will provide relevant background material.

The following topics relative to solar energy will be discussed on Friday, 30 October 2015:

- ☞ Acreage of solar systems currently installed on County and municipal land.
- ☞ Members of the RETF will read the Small and Utility Scale Solar Energy System provisions in the Code Home Rule Bill No. 5-2011 (that was emailed with the 16 October 2015 Agenda) for appropriateness to current conditions in preparation for the meeting.

Additional future topics include:

- ☞ Results of the study of the Kent County Government Buildings and Board of Education energy usage from 2010 to 2012.
- ☞ Report on energy reduction measures in County Buildings.
- ☞ Discussion with residents not connected to the grid (Janet Lewis will make contact with a resident on the Sassafras and Ms. Moredock will contact a property owner on Clark Road).
- ☞ Examples of Community Solar Energy Systems.
- ☞ Revisit the Land Use Ordinance Definitions of all renewable energy systems.
- ☞ Re-evaluate Land Use Ordinance Review Standards for all renewable energy systems.
- ☞ Consider Allegheny County regulations pertaining to wind energy systems.
- ☞ Presentations from representatives for utility scale wind energy systems (both industry representative and residents affiliated with such land use) that address why these systems will work and be cost effective.

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