

Worcester Planning Commission
MINUTES
March 21, 2024, 5:30 p.m.
via ZOOM

Attending: Chani Waterhouse, Bill Arrand, Toni Kaeding

Guest: Allen Gilbert

Housekeeping

- Chani called the meeting to order at 5:34pm
- No revisions to the agenda.
- Minutes of 1.18.24 and 2.1.24 (special meeting) were duly approved

CV Fiber Update and Q/A - Allen Gilbert

Allen Gilbert, Worcester's representative on CV Fiber Board, gave progress report on status of fiber optic build-out in Worcester/Calais. CV Fiber consists of 20 towns surrounding Montpelier. A few stats:

- 232 miles of fiber currently strung toward end goal of ~1200 miles
- 153 customers are "live" to date
- Installation of fiber optic has basic speed goal of 100 megabytes/second

Allen offered information about plans going forward. Here are the highlights:

- Current work involves creating "construction loops"
- Problems: Progress slowed by labor shortages and bad weather
- Completion goal for Worcester and Calais – late summer
- Basic fee for basic speed will be \$79/month
- Some disagreement re: benefits of fiber optic installation. Could lead to population growth and other urban-like features

Allen ended his presentation by noting that Vermont is currently the 3rd oldest state with a median age of 46.8 yrs. (US median age is 38.9 yrs.) He suggested the aging population has implications for housing, recreation (hiking trails) and more.

CVRPC Update – Bill

Bill reported that the CVRPC will be conducting information meetings on the review of Act 250. He also mentioned that the CVRPC update of the Regional Energy Plan is behind schedule, but when complete, the criteria will trickle down to individual municipalities. Heads-up Worcester Energy Plan Task Force!

Energy Task Force Update - Chani

Chani reported that progress dependent awaiting data from Sam Lash (CVRPC)

Membership Outreach

Chani reported that Rick Dyer has agreed to join the Planning Commission

Meeting was adjourned a 6:30pm. **NEXT MEETING: April 18 at 5:30pm**

