

MEMO

To: Williston Energy Committee
CC: Erik Wells, Town Manager; John Hemmelgarn, Black River Design
From: Melinda Scott, Energy and Community Development Planner
Date: September 22, 2023
Re: Energy Considerations for Community Center Scoping Study

The Community Center Scoping & Library Assessment Steering Committee was charged with championing community engagement efforts to aid in the development of possible elements for consideration to include in a future facility project. The Committee has been working with a project architectural consultant on the different alternatives and is assisting with identifying pros/cons for each alternative. The culminating deliverable will be a report and presentation to the Selectboard and Library Trustees on the options to consider.

Town Manager Erik Wells is requesting the Energy Committee's input on evaluating options for a future Community Center. The Community Center Scoping Committee would like the Energy Committee's input on the following questions:

1. Preference for reusing the existing DAML building or building a new energy efficient building.
2. Similar preference for locating the Community/Rec Center in a new or existing (unknown) structure.
3. Are there specific sustainability goals or benchmark programs the Town will be looking to achieve (LEED Silver/Gold/Platinum, Net-Zero, Living Building Challenge, . . .)?
4. Does the Committee have a preference for locating a Community Center in the Village or the Growth Center?

Town policies regarding energy efficiency and sustainability goals, excerpted below, lack a statement about prioritizing the reuse of existing buildings over the construction of new buildings. There are pros and cons to each scenario. However, the Town Plan includes policies for energy efficiency in either case. Related to the location of a Community Center, Policy 11.4 states that development of high-intensity land uses should be focused within the town's designated Growth Center to encourage multimodal transportation over driving, which could be an argument against the use of the library as a future community center because it is outside the Growth Center.

The Town's energy policies are excerpted below and should be used to guide discussion of the options.

11.3 – Municipal Energy Efficiency - Town government and local schools will lead by example, incorporating cost-effective energy efficiency and conservation measures into existing facilities and operations, as well as into plans for new buildings, additions, and renovations.

11.3.1 Review and Improve the Energy Performance of Existing Buildings and other Town Operations. The town completed energy audits on its existing municipal buildings in 2010 and 2011. As a result of these audits, a number of energy efficiency upgrades were undertaken at the Town Hall, the Town Hall Annex, and the Dorothy Alling Library. The town should continue to monitor energy usage in all town facilities and utilize additional energy conservation strategies whenever feasible.

11.3.2 Use "Green Building" Technology, as Feasible. The town and schools should consider "green building" technology for new buildings, additions, and renovations. town and school administrations should work with

architects, engineers, and contractors to document the long-term savings gained by adhering to “green building” standards like those established by Leadership on Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

11.4 – Energy Conservation and Efficiency through Land Use - The Town of Williston will continue to pursue a land use and transportation strategy centered on mixed-use, compact development in the town’s Growth Center.

The town’s land use policies and development regulations provide a powerful mechanism for promoting the development and use of land in ways to ensure that energy resources are used wisely and efficiently. To this end, the town will continue to support the development of high-intensity land uses within the town’s designated Growth Center to result in a compact development pattern that supports and encourages driving fewer miles, the use of transit, ride-sharing walking, more active modes of transportation, and other non-motorized modes of transportation.

The town’s Enhanced Energy Plan largely mirrors the Energy Chapter of the Town Plan, with additional policies summarized as follows:

- Implement recommendations of the energy audits of municipal buildings.
- Assess the efficiency levels of municipal thermal building envelopes, lighting, HVAC, and other equipment and replace as necessary with renewable energy equipment that has an energy star rating.
- All new development should meet the Vermont Building Energy Stretch Code.
- The town shall continue to lead the community by increasing its renewable energy production and battery storage portfolio of municipal buildings.
- The town will seek opportunities to pair renewable energy generation with electrical energy storage to ensure energy is utilized to the fullest potential, to increase resiliency/reliability of electrical system during outages and decrease fossil fuel usage during peak periods. Renewable energy generation projects that can accommodate energy storage are strongly encouraged.
- To the greatest extent possible, energy storage equipment should be coupled with renewable energy generation projects to add a resilient source of energy.