A "Good Neighbor" Primer for Renewable Energy Development in Vermont

Communicate with Local and State Agencies:

1. Be in contact with the town conservation commission, zoning and planning staff, and others who can alert you to potential issues raised by your project.
2. Determine the level of local and state agency data available about sites of interest and identify potential conflicts with natural resources.
3. Consider the financial impact for work done by town government and state agency staff who have to review impacts and collect sufficient data.

Identify Possible Conflicts in Advance:

1. Conduct a thorough analysis of potential conflicts between natural and environmental resources and generation impacts before you start your planning
2. Review maps to identify who might live in areas around prospective sites. Try to avoid impacts on areas where people live and own camps.

Be Good Neighbors:

1. Contact your neighbors (not just adjoiners, also those in the view, noise, and watersheds) before you have finished your project planning. Get their input, and allow it to have an impact on your planning.
2. Reach out to organizations and individuals to get their read on how your project can be most effective – both in terms of generating electricity and in terms of benefiting the community.
3. Be open about potential problems – don't pretend that they don't exist. Have an honest discussion about pros and cons, and make plans for how to deal with problems should they arise.

For Larger Projects – Larger Impacts, Bigger Solutions:

1. Develop and implement a Community Engagement Process prior to hiring experts or signing leases with landowners.
2. Create a Stakeholder Process to agree on experts to hire to evaluate impacts of your project and prepare your permit applications.
3. Contribute Intervenor Funding to enable towns and citizens to hire their own experts to evaluate your project.
4. Discuss compensating adjoining and nearby landowners and affected parties impacted by your project.
5. Make a plan with the community for how to deal with problems related to noise, runoff, road damage, etc. that might come up as the project proceeds.

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