

Planning Commission
Martin Memorial Hall
5459 Rte 5 Ascutney, VT
Planning Commission Meeting
DRAFT Monday, June 27, 2022 6:30 PM

Planning Commission Members Present:

Paul Tillman
Howard Beach
Michael Todd
Joseph Bublat

Planning Commission Members Absent: Tyler Harwell

Ryan Gumbart, Land Use Administrator

Attendees: deForest Bearse, Patti Arrison, Steve Aikenhead, Beth Hunton, Brian Bosenberg, Jonah Blum, Rika Henderson, Kathy Brown-Blum, Maureen Rogan, Beth Gorton, Mary Gulbransen, Ginger Wimberg, Bart Mair, Hank Ainley, Marina Garland, George Ainley, Julie Levy

Online Attendees: Lynn Beach, Brandon Gulnick, Todd Hindinger

1.) Call to Order made by Paul Tillman, Chair at 6:34 pm.

2.) Agenda Review

None

3.) Comments from the Chair and Land Use Administrator

Paul Tillman noted that the majority of the people in attendance likely there for the discussion on Agenda Item #7, which will be discussed, but Item #7 will be a long process and there will be much more discussion. No decisions will be made tonight on that topic.

4.) Comments from Citizens regarding items not on the agenda.

None

5.) Comments from Town Manager on any items not on the agenda

None

6.) Approval of Meeting Minutes –May 9, 2022 and June 13, 2022

Howard Beach made a motion to approve the minutes from 5-9-22

Joseph Bublat– 2nd

No discussion

Vote – unanimous

Howard Beach made a motion to approve the minutes from 6-13-22

Paul Tillman– 2nd

No discussion

Vote – unanimous

7.) Discussion on Bylaws and Future Land Use map based on June 20, 2022, Selectboard Hearing outcome

Paul Tillman made everyone aware that the bylaws and map that were sent up to the Selectboard for approval were not accepted by the Selectboard. Brandon Gulnick collected some information from the Selectboard that they would like to see as well as Paul Tillman as received a lot of information from Citizens.

Ryan Gumbart has sent the Planning Commission a copy of the bylaws as they are with everything up to date to the best of their (Ryan Gumbart and deForest Bearse) ability.

Paul Tillman went around the table asking the Planning Commission what they would like while working on this. He would like more data to back up their decisions such as the changes to the C-10.

Bart Mair asked if the Selectboard provided the Planning Commission with any specific instructions. Paul Tillman said at this time they have not received anything specific, however Paul and Mike are on the Selectboard so they have an idea of what they want as well as Brandon Gulnick is collecting information from the Selectboard.

Beth Hunton asked if there would be further discussion on the definitions. Paul said there will be discussion at some point but right now they are going to focus on what the Selectboard wants. Beth also wanted to clarify that the yellow was what was added and the strikeout was what was deleted. Paul confirmed this was correct.

Brian Bosenberg asked if they could add the land that is conserved and can't be developed and if they could make it available in layers online for everyone. Paul said they are going to have further discussion regarding the maps later in the meeting about the maps.

Steve Aikenhead wanted to know if the messages that Paul received were distributed to all the commission members. Paul said not yet as they are still be collected, however, they are all public. They will be given to everyone in a packet.

Ginger Winberg wanted to know from the Commission why they think these changes are better? And is it true that in-Town would go from 1-Acre to ½ acre? Paul said they were thinking more development, less taxes for everyone. The ½ acre lots were not just for development, some of them were for the non-conforming lots.

Rika Henderson compared the waterways in our area to ponds and area in the Cape. Michael Todd agreed that there are many similarities between the 2 and that the Planning Commission tries to take those things into consideration.

Mary Gulbranson suggested that any land that belongs to the Corps of Engineers or the State of Vermont, can it not be listed as C-10? Paul Tillman said that they had discussed this and would be labeled differently when they update the map.

Patti Arrison had the feeling over the past few meetings that there might be some things missing from the Planning Commissions consideration. The problematic areas are the C-10 and development in the Villages. She said that David Fuller had said that there are no farms in Weathersfield anymore, and while there are no commercial dairy farms in Weathersfield there are a number of commercial farms; Split Rock, Cas Cad Nac, and Deep Meadow Farm. There is also Goulden Ridge Farm, Four Square Farm, and at the last meeting the family that have small family farms.

deForest Bearse noted that the Town Plan under the facilities should have the long-range plan for the Fire Departments. It has not had it recently, but it should have.

Marina Garland said that affordability has come up a few times and someone said that if we go from C-10 to 3-5 that 3-5 would go for what C-10 used to go for. Changing zoning seems separate from how affordable the housing is. The power to decide our zoning does not give us the power to make the housing affordable.

Todd Hindinger wanted to hear about the process and he had sent eight or so comments to the Planning Commission and he wanted to make sure they received them. Paul confirmed that they were received. As for the process, the Planning Commission is back at square one. They want to have a much clearer document before having another hearing.

Beth Gorton stated that no one has brought up that the tax base goes up just by having smaller lot sizes because if you have 2 to 3 buildable lots in your 10-acres, you can be taxed as if you have 3 buildable lots. Michael Todd address this, he has 2 buildable lots.

Paul Tillman asked Ryan Gumbart for a clean map and bylaws to start fresh. He would also like a copy at the library and at Town Hall for people to have access to who don't have internet.

8.) Discussion on remote vs in-person board member participation

Paul Tillman asked that the Planning Commission members to start attending meetings in person again.

9.) Subdivision – Bylaws/PUD Review/Checklist – State mandated items to verify

10.) Discussion of plotter for Land Use Office – to print maps for review and meetings

Item #10 and #12 were combined. Paul would like to have Ryan get prices on plotters and printing process for multiple places as well as software titles and pricing to present at the next meeting so they the Planning Commission does not have rely on other sources for printing.

11.) Discussion of the Planning Commission Page on the Town website – content/responsible parties

Ryan and Paul will work with Brandon to update the Planning Commission web page. Going forward Paul and Ryan will be responsible for updates to the page.

12.) Discussion of a mapping software program – read and change maps as needed

Item #10 and #12 were combined. Paul would like to have Ryan get prices on plotters and printing process for multiple places as well as software titles and pricing to present at the next meeting so they the Planning Commission does not have rely on other sources for printing.

13.) Discussion of the Role of Regional Planning has with our board and what would be needed to move forward with any bylaw/bylaw/map/town plan changes – State statute of legal obligations. – tabled for a future meeting.

14.) Town Plan – Energy Section – tabled for a future meeting.

15.) Town Plan – General tabled for a future meeting.

16.) Bylaws – 2nd Round update – tabled for a future meeting.

17.) Discussion of Items for Future Agendas

- Plotter pricing
- Mapping software pricing
- Town Plan – Energy Section
- Town Plan – General
- Bylaws

18.) Any other business that can be legally discussed

None

19.) Adjourn

Howard Beach made a motion to adjourn at 8:53 pm

Michael Todd – 2nd

No discussion

Vote - unanimous

Next Planning Commission Meeting is scheduled for Monday, July, 11 2022 at 6:30 pm at Martin Memorial Hall.

Respectfully,
Chauncie Tillman
Recording Secretary



Planning Commission

Howard Beach, Vice - Chair

Joseph Bublat, Clerk

Tyler Harwell, Chairperson

Paul Tillman, Chair

Michael Todd, Chairperson



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