

Town of Wallingford, VT
Planning Commission
October 25, 2017

Members Present: Erika Berner (Chair), J. Biasuzzi (serving as ZA & recorder), Kevin Mullin, Justin Jankus, Michael McMahon, Jill Burkett

Others Present: Elysa Smigielski (Planner, Rutland Regional Planning Commission; RRPC) attendance roster (addendum1)

Meeting was called to order by E. Berner at 6:02 p.m. and was electronically recorded.

Review of Agenda

E. Berner requested a Motion to approve the meeting Agenda. K. Mulling Moved to approve; J. Jankus seconded; all approved and Motion passed.

E. Berner had the PC Members, ZA, and RRPC Planner introduce themselves.

E. Berner stated to the unusually large number of visitors in attendance that this was a special “Working Meeting” with the purpose to continue progress on drafting a revised Town Plan. She further clarified that the draft Town Plan was not yet complete, and far from even starting the statutory warning and review process.

E. Smigielski, RRPC Planner, opened discussion with the **section on Economic Development**. She suggested that an “Action Item” under this topic be to seek a grant to employ an Economic Development Consultant, who would be qualified to apply existing and future research to make recommendations on how to attract new business and support existing ones. M. McMahon asked how the PC can authorize such an appointment; which should be approved by the Select Board. E. Berner clarified this was a suggested action item. Any grant application for a Consultant would first have to be approved by the Select Board.

M. McMahon expressed concern about discussion to restrict advertising in business windows. E. Smigielski noted that this had been discussed in an earlier PC meeting without opposition; stating that her research indicates that business do not like to encourage controversial advertising (ex: tobacco products).

K. Mullin noted that the new Town Plan would be in effect for eight years, and should offer clear direction (especially to new) businesses on issues such as (tobacco) advertising.

Continuing (from the last PC meeting) through the List of Action Items; the PC discussed: (2019)

- a. Holding (future) Community Workshops, to be scheduled for the second year of the Plan. (These Workshops would serve to exchange information with Residents on topics of interest. Examples cited include:
 - 1. Educating residents on use of Uber, Ride Share, and other public transportation options that could be

available.

2. Enhancing the Historic Village appeal by (long-term) planning to bury utility lines.
 3. Meet to discuss the Junk Ordinance. M. McMahon noted that Ordinances are the Select Board's jurisdiction.
- b. Replanting of (existing but deteriorating) trees along the main streets (for 4th year, 2022).
 - c. Development of a "Pocket Park" and Bus Shelter on Library grounds (for 4th year, 2022).
 - d. Update a local Business Directory and Map, in co-operation with town Merchants Association (for 2nd year, 2020)
 - e. Develop a coordinated Townwide Calendar of events for the entire year. This would help various groups to plan their fund raising and community events so to avoid competing with each other for attendance on the same date (Example; holding several dinners on the same Saturday). This would also assist in scheduling and advertising events compatible on the same date (Example: a Town wide Yard Sale and F.D. BBQ). The calendar could be setup on the Town website, and/or Front Porch Forum. For 2nd year of Plan (2020).
 - f. Showcase an advertising campaign for the Town. This should include all three Villages, the Town's Recreational resources, inform of annual events, etc. K. Mullin felt this should be accomplished by the Plan's 2nd year (2020).
 - g. Seek funding to promote Community Arts activities. These could include exterior murals, music and entertainment events (Example: Open Mike evenings), guided walks of historic or natural resources, etc. (schedule for 3rd year, 2021)
 - h. **The Historic Society** to be asked to update a pamphlet style directory of Historic Buildings; with a self –guided tour format that could be available at a weather proof kiosk (perhaps by the Boy with the Boot fountain). The kiosk could also hold the Business Directory (item d).
 - i. **Recreation** Committee to research possible routes to develop into bicycle paths.
 - j. **Recreation or Conservation** Committees to develop an education program to inform and help control the spread of invasive plants, animal, and aquatic species. Develop a lecture series (for both adults and a school levels) on Invasives, Clean Water (and erosion control), recreational safety equipment and planning, and other related topics. Schedule for 1st year (2019).
 - k. Research (future) adoption of VT River Corridor language into the Town Plan; in cooperation with the Select Board; starting in 1st year (2019).
 - l. As a **Community Facilities** item, research a permanent location (perhaps the South Wallingford Grange) to house a Town Museum. This would free up the Town Hall second floor for larger community events. Schedule for 4th year (2022).
 - m. **Transportation** items would include:
 1. PC to coordinate with RRPC for grant for an Electric Vehicle Charging Station. For 3rd year (2021)
 2. PC to work with Prudential Committee to resolve issues with installing and maintaining sidewalks. For 5th year (2023).
 3. Promote the use of existing Park and Ride (refer to a.1, above). For 1st year (2019).
 4. Promote Ride Share workshop (refer to a. 1, above). For 2nd year (2020).
 - n. Under **Housing** action items; E. Smigielski noted that the US Census data is difficult to apply to a small community such as Wallingford. A better data source is the American Community

Survey. She suggested seeking a grant for a Consultant to research the actual housing needs for the Town, and where to locate new housing. Schedule for 3rd year (2021).

- o. Under **Energy**, the Town Energy Committee's current recommendations should be noted in the Plan. This Committee to be asked to confer with Utilities (GMP), energy generation companies, and energy efficiency experts (Efficiency VT) for recommendations on future and alternative energy requirements.

E. Smigielski noted that she was continuing to draft the **Land Use** component to the Town Plan. Other required elements to the Plan needing discussion include the **Designated Village and Flood Resiliency** (refer to line item k, above). Additional work also needed in identifying the **Community Facilities**.

E. Smigielski concluded her discussion, and offered to stay to answer further questions.

E. Berner then Opened the Meeting to Public Input:

- a. Judy & Lynn Edmund submitted a prepared statement (Addendum 2), which K. Mullin read aloud.

- b. Christopher Dunnigan referenced his initial business plan when first locating to Wallingford (20+ years ago) and purchasing the Old Stone Shop, which encouraged investment in the Main Village. He disclosed he was under contract to purchase 27 N. Main St. (Mom's Diner), and hoped to rent the restaurant to a new operator. He supported the Plans' recommendation for an Economic Development Study.

- c. There were several comments submitted on the importance of local zoning. E. Smigielski thanked the audience for their participation in the review and adoption process.

- d. Joyce Barbieri encouraged the PC to utilize the talents and experience of the Town's residents and business owners; asking for their opinion and advice whenever a Plan element is being discussed.

- e. David Cornwell asked why the error in the South Wallingford industrial Zoning District had still not been corrected. His preference is to Town Zoning map before the Town Plan update. The ZA and E. Berner both referred to earlier meeting discussions where it was determined the Town Plan needed to be updated first, and that the Zoning Regulations would then be revised to reflect any changes in the Town Plan, change any Zoning District boundaries, and correct or clarify existing language.

After receiving several other comments from those in attendance, the PC moved on to schedule the next PC meeting for Monday, November 13, 2017 at 7:00 pm, at Town Office.

E. Berner requested a Motion to close the Special Meeting. J. Burkett made the Motion to end the meeting; K. Mullin seconded; all approved and the Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jeffrey Biasuzzi

Approved with correction 12/13/17 PC Meeting

