

DRAFT

Town of Wallingford, VT

Special Planning Commission (P.C.) Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2019 Town Offices, 75 School St.

Members Present: Erika Berner (Chair), Kevin Mullin, Tony Masuck, Jill Burkett

Members Absent: Justin Jankus,

Others Present: J. Biasuzzi (Zoning Administrator, Recorder), R. Provost, L. Williams, L. Trischetti, C. Dunigan, N. Drinkwater, J. Armstrong

The Meeting was called to order by E. Berner at 7:01 p.m. and audio was electronically recorded. The Panel introduced themselves to the visitors.

Review of Agenda

E. Berner requested a Motion to amend the draft Meeting Agenda to allow M. Provost to speak first; to announce a member resignation; and include discussion on proposed sale of Fernfield Farms acreage to tax exempt organizations. K. Mullin so Moved to accept the amended Agenda. All approved and Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

E. Berner then asked for a Motion to approve the Minutes of July 8, 2019. K. Mullen Moved to accept the Minutes, with the spelling of his name corrected. T. Masuck seconded, all others approved and Motion passed. *ZA Note: the March 11, 2019 Minutes remain unapproved as J. Jankus was not present to participate.*

S. Main Street multi-family development discussion:

Robert Provost (dba Homevesters/Golden Rule Investments LLC) introduced himself, and stated he had recently purchased the two-family house and 1.2 acres at 150 S. Main Street in the Village. His plans for the property include construction of up to seven new Dwelling Units in the open space west of the existing structures. He has not decided on the project design at this time. His purpose for requesting a meeting with the PC was to collect information on how he may proceed with a proposed project. Mr. Provost is an experienced developer, and showed examples of several housing projects completed in Chittenden County. He asked what the local population needs and would support. J. Biasuzzi offered to forward him information from the July 2019 report from the VT Council on Rural Development, which identified resident preferences for the Community. These included maintaining the historic character of the Village.

Mr. Provost had requested the ZA review the Town Plan and Zoning Regulations on if a Planned Unit Development (PUD) or Condominium project was possible in the Town. (Note: *The ZA provided this on 8/31/19, with copies emailed to the PC.*) While the DRB would review a proposal as a Conditional Use, such housing projects are not prohibited by Zoning.

Currently, he is considering a Common Interest Community (CIC) development approach for the S. Main property. A CID involves private ownership of the structure and the footprint it occupies, but the surrounding land, infrastructure and improvements are owned in common by the Developer, or eventually by an Owner's Association. The PC thanked Mr. Provost for his time and information, and expressed their encouragement in developing a project and application to the Town.

Energy Plan (EP) Review:

John Armstrong discussed the draft Energy Plan, which was still being “fine tuned”, but near the final version and ready for start of the adoption process; as an amendment to the Town Plan. This Energy Plan includes the required enhanced language required to grant the Town “Substantial Deference” consideration by VT’s Public Utility Commission in any future application for net-metered alternative energy generation (solar, wind, hydro, geothermal) projects. Mr. Armstrong noted that the recent solar projects have met the Town’s energy goal up to 2025, but that a total of about 80 acres of solar generation area is likely needed to meet VT’s mandated 2050 objective. He noted that the EP identifies that a significant percentage of the township is not suitable for commercial solar projects.

The timing objective for the required adoption process is to have the Select Board hold its second (final) Public Hearing on the EP at the March Town Meeting, and have the Voters approve by Australian ballot.

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) was scheduled to review the draft Town EP on 9/17/19. If deemed compliant with the RRPC Plan, the PC could move forward with scheduling its Public Hearing.

Public Input:

There was no new issues for discussion submitted by those in attendance.

PC Member Resignation:

E. Berner announced that Justin Jankus has submitted his resignation from the PC. J. Burket made a Motion to accept the resignation and forward to the Select Board. K. Mullin seconded, all approved, and Motion passed. The PC Members Thank Justin for his service. As an Alternate Member, W. Brooks will be requested to attend future meetings. The Town is to renew efforts to find another volunteer to serve on the PC.

Discussion/ Updates of Zoning Regulations to comply with Town Plan

- a. E. Berner requested review of Specific Zoning District setbacks at the October meeting. J. Biasuzzi has already submitted suggestions for setbacks for each Zoning District, and members can review in preparation for the next meeting.
- b. J. Burkett still assigned to review Signs (IX), and the size specifications for each Zoning District. She is also to suggest improvements on Trailer & Rec. Campground (VIII), and Mobile Home Parks (VII).
- c. T. Masuck to review General Regulations (V)
- d. J. Biasuzzi and will review and Permitted & Conditional Uses for the Specific Zoning Districts (IV).
- e. K. Mullin will continue efforts to amend to Industrial District in South Wallingford
K. Mullin asked (again) where the Select Board stood on the issue of amending the S. Wallingford Industrial Zone. At an earlier meeting this year, the S.B. had tabled the P.C.’s request to “poll” South Wallingford residents.

Other Business:

E. Berner requested discussion on the Town Administrator's correspondence regarding a sale of 480+/- acres of Fernfield Farms land on Hartsboro Road to a tax exempt trust, which will eventually transfer ownership to the USDA/Green Mountain National Forest. Removal of this acreage from the Town tax basis is anticipated to cost all town property owners an additional (flat) increase \$0.14 in their annual property tax bill.

J. Biasuzzi expressed his opposition to removing this from the tax roll without adequate compensation from the GMNF. Further, he stated that removal of 2900+/- lineal feet of town road frontage (and some reasonable percentage of the land attached) reduces the availability for future generations to acquire smaller parcels for use as homesteads. This reduction in the supply of available (buildable) acreage will likely impact the cost of land for the next generation; reducing new housing opportunities which could maintain a tax base, and increase the Town's population which support the local economy.

T. Masuck made a Motion to recommend the sale to the Select Board, J. Burkett seconded, all approved and motion passed.

Schedule for next Meeting:

K. Mullin noted he would be unable to attend a November meeting.

The next regular Meeting of the PC was set for 7:00 pm, Monday, October 14, 2019, at Town Offices, 75 School St., Wallingford Village.

Adjournment:

E. Berner requested a Motion to Adjourn. K. Mullin made a Motion to conclude the Meeting, J. Burkett seconded, all approved, and the Meeting Adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Jeffrey Biasuzzi

Approved _____