# Town of Hinesburg
# Planning Commission
## May 22th, 2013
*DRAFT*

Members Present: Aaron Kimball, Tim Clancy, Maggie Gordon, Kyle Bostwick, Grace Ciffo, Jean Isham. Members Absent: Joe Iadanza, Johanna White, Bob Linck.
Also present: Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning), Freeda Powers (Recording Secretary). Visiting from CCTA Meredith Birkett (Dir. Of Planning & Marketing). Public included: John Roos, Karla Munson.

Tim C. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:33pm. Tim C. opened the meeting by asking for any public comments on non-agenda items. There were none.

The board welcomed Meredith Birkett from CCTA who came to present the CCTA Transit Development Plan and discuss steps the community can take to improve effectiveness of transit. The plan, completed in 2010, ***. Tim C. asked why CCTA does this presentation to the Planning Commission in particular. Meredith said municipalities should create local zoning that more strongly supports and incentivizes transit oriented development, including higher density and mixed use projects, along transit corridors in their communities. Meredith reviewed the major components of the plan, noting that it has been very successful in its aim to coordinate with the state and local municipalities to achieve goals such as access to employment, coordinated & efficient development, environmental benefits and others.

Kyle B. asked Meredith what they find is the biggest barrier to extending service. She said funding is the main barrier, but added that getting people to change their habits is also a difficult task.

Grace C. asked about the formula in the plan which ties a density level of 3H/A (roughly equal to .25A zoning) and how that would apply to a rural place like Hinesburg. Meredith said CCTA has tried to identify transit corridors where we know we'll have near-future high quality transit services. Smart development along a bus line accomplishes many good things for a community. They have established services along Rte. 116 to serve the villages of some rural areas including Hinesburg. There are other opportunities for new commuter services including VT15. Market assessments show that the further removed from current routes, the greater the cost will be to tie them to the system. She went on to say that in trying to focus on cost effectiveness, they invest in the highest density areas first. While it is still important to serve the rural areas, this is a balance they try to strike between these different goals. She said they would like to develop regional funding but are struggling with the best solution to do that.

Tim C. asked about how much of each $1.00 is spent on ridership. Meredith said about .25 cents. Tim C. said this means that the subsidizing is very important. Meredith agreed. Kyle

B. asked what CCTA's annual budget is. Meredith said about $3M, about 20% of which is locally funded. Aaron K. asked wouldn't expanding services take some of that funding burden off the state & government? Alex W. said yes, but not enough to tip the budget either way. Meredith B. added that CCTA does reach out to businesses for local contributions (NRG as an example) but said this is not sustainable funding.

When applying the CCTA plan presentation to local regulations, Meredith B. suggested the commission consider such things as encouraging density and mixed use development within the village, focused development that considers increased pedestrian connectivity, consider non-auto user access to buildings (i.e., door at street), allow park&rides in existing lots, etc. She said they can and should make regs that guide the DRB in considering transit services in any given application. Jean I. suggested the commission review parking regulations and consider changes accordingly. Grace C. asked what time of year sees the highest demand or ridership. Meredith said ridership typically goes up in May and October and decreases in December.

Meredith said CCTA encourages the commission to engage with them, ask questions or just have dialogue. She requested they consider the addition of a bus stop at the Mobil gas station if and when the Hannaford store comes in and also would like to see them consider incorporating transit into the Town Plan revision discussions. Tim C. agreed. Aaron K. asked what happens to the commuter service if it doesn't hit the set benchmarks. Meredith said it must meet them in order to continue or expand; thus far it is on target for its first year.

**Shoreline Regulations—Community Survey (ct'd from 5/8)**

The board reviewed the revised survey, as provided by Alex W. Preamble will be emailed to commissioners by Alex. Grace C. said she likes the survey as is, she feels it gets a litmus right away.

Tim C. said he likes polarizing answers (Y/N) and he feels responses like "unsure" (Q #8) are hard to interpret. He is interested in the process over the results and considers the purpose of the data; to guide us and act as a counter balance or better, broader representation. He suggests an option that demonstrates "no opinion."
Kyle B. voiced concerns around Q #9 regarding development around the lakes. He said he fears an "all or nothing" result. Alex W. noted this process isn't shutting the door on landowner's rights.

Jean I. made a **Motion to approve the survey with preamble.** Kyle B. **seconded the motion.** All in favor, the board voted **6-0.** Jean I. asked about response time. Alex W. said he was thinking of disseminating the survey in early June with a 3wk return time.

**RR1 Zoning District Revisions:**

The board caught up on previous discussions from Jan.9th and 23rd and discussed possible next steps. Alex W. said the board has the option to break RR1 into 3 districts per previous discussions. He said they also had previously discussed the possibility of reviewing the Mobil Home Parks to incentivize improved connectivity and livability.

Tim C. reiterated his previous view of the RR1 area which breaks down like this: the Pritchard Hill area looks very much like RR2, the southern area feels like the AG district, and the highly dense areas in the center fit with the Village Growth Area. He asked what happens to the district if they chose to expand the shoreline district to include the entire watershed. Alex W. showed maps of the watershed, which demonstrated that including that in the shoreline district takes the section east of the lakes out of the discussion. Tim C. said he fears that if they were to go back on the take-outs, there could be a potential increase impact of development around the edges of protected areas. Alex W. said the board can consider adjusting the density numbers or reevaluate the take-outs, either way they come out with essentially the same result. Tim C. said breaking RR1 down into 3 separate areas makes sense.

It was noted that development along the Richmond Road area is unique in RR1 as well. There was some discussion around development along town sewer lines. Jean I. suggested adding sewer service lines to the VGA. Alex W. noted historical reasons why the Selectboard had chosen not to do this. Tim C. said it seems we would want complimentary zoning where the infrastructure exists. Alex W. said typically, yes, except with legacy systems as we have here, that were not intended for increased development. He cautioned the board about expanding density beyond the "core."

Jean I. suggested considering lowering the Minimum Lot Size (3A) without increasing the density of the area. Alex W. said he can get data showing build-out of the area but noted there is not much development potential tight to the Richmond Road area, more so off roads on larger lots.

Jean I. asked about the possibility of an over-lay district to cover the Mobil Home Parks. Alex W. said we almost have one in the regs already (Sec. 5.19). He suggested having someone from the state come in to talk on this topic.

Alex W. asked the board how they would like to proceed. Kyle B. said he would like to reach out for feedback. Grace C. suggested trying a "meeting in a box" to inform and gather opinions and ideas. Tim C. said he would like to go in telling people what the implication is. He suggested using RR2 discussions as a template on how to move forward. He noted there is a lot going on in the RR1 district and it's complicated. There was some consideration as to whether the Mobil Home Parks and development along sewer lines should be separate discussions. Tim C., Grace C. and Kyle B. all agreed it makes sense to take these up as separate topics. Jean I. felt the area is small enough that they could discuss both concerns.

**Minutes from 5/8/13:**
Jean I. **made a motion to approve as amended** the minutes from 5/8. Maggie G. **seconded the motion.** The board voted **5-0.** Kyle B. abstained from voting as he was not present at the 5/8 meeting.

**Other Business & Announcements:**
Tim C. attended the Act250 Prehearing on May 15th; he reported that it was uneventful. Alex W. noted that expert testimony requires two weeks' notice in advance of meetings, so

if the commission has anything more to provide, they should get it to him quickly. He also noted that appointed PC representatives only need to attend hearings that pertain to the applicable criteria (#10).

Jean I. made a **motion to adjourn.** Maggie G. **seconded the motion.** The board voted **6-0.** The meeting ended at 10:16pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Freeda Powers--Recording Secretary

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