



Planning Commission

Town Of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes - May 28, 2014

- Approved July 23, 2014 -

Members Present: Maggie Gordon, Tim Clancy, Aaron Kimball, Dennis Place, Joe Iadanza, Kyle Bostwick, Russell Fox, Rolf Kielman.

Members Absent: Neal Leitner.

Also present: Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning), Freeda Powers (Recording Secretary).

Public Present: None.

Joe I. chaired the meeting which was called to order at 7:36 p.m. There were no public comments for non-agenda items.

Minutes of the May 14th, 2014 Meeting

Minutes from May 14th were not available.

Town Plan Update

The Board discussed the upcoming Town Plan Update and decided on what issues or topics they most wish to see addressed. Kyle B. suggested they pick topics that they could get feedback on and each Commissioner could take one issue and run a series of public meetings to facilitate community involvement. Aaron K. was intrigued by this idea and said it might be a good way to promote the work in a positive and exciting way.

Rolf K. asked for clarification on the timeframe of this process. Alex W. said the aim is to have the draft to the Select Board by May 2015 (one year before the new Town Plan adoption date). He said the Planning Commission could postpone that until summer. Joe I. said he would prefer to get it to them with adequate lead time to get proper Select Board attention. Alex W. said either way, we need to have the finished draft around March 2015.

Kyle B. suggested reworking of the Planning Commissions' schedule in order to get more engagement with the community and other committees/boards this fall. Alex W. agreed but also reminded the Commissioners that it would be beneficial to take advantage of some summertime activities around town, such as the Summer Concerts at the Elementary School green, the 4th of July Parade and even small neighborhood gatherings.

Dennis P. reiterated his suggestion of sending out the community survey or a reminder to complete the survey with the outgoing tax bills. Alex W. said it would be good to get the survey out earlier than that,

preferably in June. Also, he said, the Town Clerk may not be agreeable to sending notices or surveys with the tax bills. Joe I. said he would be opposed to sending the survey out with the tax bills. He said what is likely to happen is that the survey will sit in the envelope with the tax bill until November. Kyle B. said we could still do a mailing, just do it separately from the tax bills.

Rolf K. was interested to know what our typical survey response is. Aaron K. said we received just over 200 responses to the shoreline survey. Tim C. said the more responses we get, the more data we collect, is a good thing. Rolf K. asked what was behind Dennis P.'s suggestion for sending the survey out with the tax bills; to get more responses or to get a wider variety of responses. Dennis P. said he thought it would garner more responses. The Board discussed the time frame of getting the survey out and considered getting it out early but allowing it to remain "open" for responses through the summer months. Joe I. said he does not think there is a down side to doing the survey early, nor in leaving it open later. However, he suggested, we should get that interim, early feedback that comes in and apply it to the work the Commission is continuing on this year.

Joe I. asked for clarification around Kyle B.'s idea of small groups within the community which would be lead by each Planning Commissioner and would each address a specific topic or issue being addressed in the revised Town Plan. He said the venues suggested (i.e., Good Times Café, Bristol Bakery, Public House, etc.) are rather small, which may result in either low attendance or an overwhelmed venue and speaker. He suggests multiple Planning Commissioners be present at each of these events to listen to nuance and speak to smaller groups. Aaron K. suggested local committees could come speak to specific sections of the Town Plan (i.e., Affordable Housing Committee, Trails Committee, etc.).

Russell F. suggested word-of-mouth as a way of spreading the word about the survey and the issues at hand. He said if each Commissioner agreed to knock on a handful of doors in their respective neighborhoods, that act multiplies when you ask the individuals to then share the survey or information with a handful of their friends or neighbors. In this way, he said, we can reach all areas of the town. Alex W. said it would be easy to contact people electronically (i.e., email addresses). Tim C., Kyle B., and Russell F. all agreed to talk to people living in their neighborhoods. Russell F. said in his view, people want to have a voice and knowing they have a way to share that has a real value. Alex W. said he prefers an approach in which we take the information to the people rather than hoping the people will seek out the information from us.

Kyle B. said if any of these methods garner additional responses, he feels we should do them.

Kyle B. suggested that if we do take the approach of asking the various committees to offer feedback or suggestions, that we avoid asking questions that are directly related to the cause of the committee. Aaron K. agreed to list the different committees and their meeting schedules so Planning Commissioners can select and attend pertinent forums.

Regarding potential summertime connection possibilities, Maggie G. said the Hinesburg Historical Society sets up an informative table at the July 4th parade, but noted that finding space is an issue. Tim C. suggested also the annual Book Sale held at Town Hall during the July 4th activities might be a good place to set up for sharing/gathering info. He added that he feels 9 topics are too many to address, and

is overly ambitious. Kyle B. said his idea for the informal gatherings within the community would be that they run approximately 45 minutes, focus on one topic and are coordinated by 2 Planning Commission members. Tim C. said he would like to get a broad range of responses, not just from those that seem to always speak out.

The Board felt that fall and winter times would be best for guest speakers to join the informative sessions with the community.

Russell F. suggested posting on Front Porch Forum asking for feedback regarding what topics should be addressed on the survey. Tim C. said he liked this idea, adding that one question on the survey could be taken directly from town feedback. Russell F. agreed to post to FPF.

Kyle B. suggested local businesses may be willing to assist us in disseminating the survey by handing them out or leaving a stack by the register. He agreed to ask some of the local businesses if they would do this.

Shoreline Zoning District Regulation Revisions (Cont'd from 4/9/14 meeting).

The Board reviewed some of the new regulations adopted at the State level, including a 250' buffer zone around lakes/100' vegetation clearing limits/impervious surface within 250' (will require a new state permit)/slope requirements and the opt out option which gives allowances if additions are made to structures on the side facing away from the waterline, unless the amount of runoff is equal to or lesser than vs. the opposite side.

Tim C. asked about incentives. Alex W. said they are not like ours, but the new language does touch on it. Tim C. asked if we should be using the state's standard as our basis. Rolf K. agreed. Alex W. agreed, adding that our language will aim to also address existing non-complying structures.

Still to consider, Alex W. went on, is the potential job of breaking up the RR1 district vs. creating an overlay district to address the concerns within the greater watershed. Dennis P. asked what has the worst impact on the lakes. Russell F. said the runoff and water velocity are top concerns. Tim C. asked if septic systems tend to be a big concern. Joe I. reminded him that septic issues are regulated by the state, not at the local level. He said we should be considering allowed uses, slopes etc. Alex W. asked if the Board would prefer to put off further discussions around RR1 until the Town Plan revision is complete. Aaron K. said yes. Joe I. said this is not what he recalled from previous scheduling discussions. Tim C. asked is there any risk in delaying the work on RR1? Alex W. said RR1 is the most settled portion of town, but it does not have a great deal of development pressure on it now. Tim C. asked what is more important to the Planning Commission: Shoreline or RR1? Rolf K. asked if there are a lot of camp modifications done around the lakes. Alex W. said no, but more overall Development Review Board applications come from the Shoreline District than from the RR1 district. Joe I. said uses in the Shoreline District may be smaller in scale, but their impacts to water quality are bigger and more immediate. He said the RR1 work would demonstrate consistency with the AG & RR2 work already done. Tim C. asked about development pressures from the Village Growth Area build-out, saying eventually those pressures will spill into the RR1 district. Rolf K. said if only for convenience, he feels the Board should deal with the Shoreline District so as to correlate with the work the state is doing on the same issue. Russell F. agreed. Dennis P. said camp conversions are a great place to incentivize with

required improvements to address storm water. Joe I. said we should also consider the resources/expertise of the administration of the new regulations we create. Dennis P. said if a majority of existing camps never do any modifications, how will we address those failing or inadequate systems? Kyle B. and Joe I. both agreed that the answer to that is the education piece.

Other Business: None.

Aaron K. asked about recent applications for cell towers. Alex W. reviewed the recent VTEL application for Baldwin Road which proposed to modify an existing silo on Leavensworth Road to accommodate a cell tower. The town has received a pre-application notice. In addition, there was a proposal near Richmond for a cell tower to be located in Hinesburg but that application has since been withdrawn.

Aaron K. asked about the budget and specifically the new contract which offers staff assistance from the Regional Planning Commission. Alex W. said yes, after July 1st funds will be available in the budget to pay for assistance, input and collaboration with RCP and the Planning & Zoning department.

Aaron K. asked if other towns also revise their Town Plan. Alex W. said yes, and the process is similar though the formats differ. For example, Alex W. said, Shelburne separates its Town Plan into two documents; one is Data, one is Recommendations. Essex's Town Plan is short, graphic, with references to other documents.

Maggie G. made a motion to adjourn. Rolf K. seconded the motion. The Board voted 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Freeda Powers--Recording Secretary

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