



## Planning Commission

Town Of Hinesburg  
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### Meeting Minutes - June 11, 2014

- Approved July 23, 2014 -

**Members Present:** Maggie Gordon, Aaron Kimball, Rolf Kielman, Neal Leitner, Joe Iadanza.

**Members Absent:** Dennis Place, Kyle Bostwick, Russell Fox, Tim Clancy.

**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 7:43 p.m. There were no public comments for non-agenda items.

#### Town Plan Update (cont'd from 5/28 mtg.)

The Board reviewed draft questions for the upcoming community survey and were given the opportunity to actually take the survey via online services of Survey Monkey. Maggie G. said she really liked the addition of photos from around Hinesburg. She said the intro felt wordy but having read it several times, she was unable to determine where to cut it back. Aaron K. agreed.

Rolf K. said overall, the survey was done well. He wondered how much it mirrored the 2003 survey. Alex W. said 4 or 5 of the 14 questions were mirrored from that 2003 survey, the remainder were new. The Board agreed to leave the survey open until mid-August.

Question #1) *What do you like most about Hinesburg? (Select up to 3).*

Maggie G. said she likes the “chose three” portion of this question’s answer options. Joe I. asked about one of the answer options which was *Quality of School System*; he wonders how actionable that response would be as the school systems are regulated at the state level, not at the local level. Alex W. said the Town Plan does have a section on the school system (Section 5.6.1). In addition, he said, people often mention it as a reason to move to Hinesburg. Joe I. said he still doesn’t know what to do with the school responses. He asked how we would interpret it as a Planning Commission. Aaron K. argued for keeping the school reference in the survey, saying the average resident or community member may have kids in the school system. At minimum, he said, it would be an additional data point, from there it would be our job as the Planning Commission to bring that info into the Town Plan or to the appropriate entity (i.e. Board, Committee). Joe I. said he agrees, but that he feels the school board should do that, not the Town Plan. Maggie G. said she understands what Aaron K. is saying—the answers are good info to have and we may find the school systems to be an important reason people move to Hinesburg. Joe I. said he is ok with leaving it in the survey.

Neal L. suggesting something in the survey to address the affordability of housing. Rolf K. suggested rewording of the response that addresses *Housing availability* so that it reads *Adequate & Affordable Housing*. The Board agreed to make the change in Q1 and Q2 to reflect this.

Question #2) *What do you feel are the top three challenges facing Hinesburg over the next 5-10 years? (Select up to 3).*

Joe I. encouraged a question to address the balance of developed communities; i.e. walkability, large scale industrial development, provisions for Fire, Police, etc., utilities. Neal L. said he liked the idea of mentioning Utilities on the survey (to mean communications, internet, and phone). Maggie G. didn't understand putting Utilities on the survey, as she figured we have no choice on that issue. However, Joe I. noted that is not the case, citing the proposition for 3-Phase Power, gas which is currently in the village (to expand that?), the ongoing concern with the water system, as just a few examples. Rolf K. said he liked including Utilities as it relates to infrastructure. The Board felt it would be good to label this Community Infrastructure to include these items. Aaron K. said in his opinion, water and communications are the most prevalent concerns for people. He also suggested Q2 be in the ranking style, as opposed to picking a top 3. Joe I. agreed that a ranking system would be best for Q2. Maggie G. suggested eliminating the school related response in Q2.

Maggie G. asked what was meant by "balance" in this discussion. Joe I. said in his view, Hinesburg is not a typical bedroom community; we have industrial areas, are a full service small town. The attempt is to keep that and find out how the mixed-use development pattern is playing out. Maggie G. said she feels that the concern of balance is covered well in the other examples already listed in Q2.

Aaron K. said Q7 touches on the existing balance of development. Joe I. said yes, that question addresses it, but it is an important topic in his opinion. Mixed-use has no provided formulary so he said it would be good to see some feedback on how that balance is working out in projects that have been done thus far. Rolf K. said this relates to the character and quality of how the village grows. He suggested a question that addresses this, noting there were big struggles with the last three major projects in the community (Kinney's, Hannaford & now Black Rock). There has been genuine and sincere resistance to work that flowed out of this particular body (Planning Commission). As part of the Commission, he said, he wishes the results of this work would breed a more contented result.

Maggie G. said the speed of development is asked about in the survey, though this is a different concern than the one Rolf K's question tries to get at. Joe I. said most people see the village area as different from the village growth area which is where he would like to get feedback about.

In Q2, Maggie G. asked what we mean by *accommodating growth and development*. Joe I. said to him that means "friendly to". The Board agreed to change that language to read *managing growth & development*.

Question #3) *Do you feel the community is prepared for the challenges Hinesburg may face over the next 5-10 years?*

Alex W. said this is really a confidence question, one which he would like to track over time. Joe I. said he doesn't know what to do with the answer to this question. Joe I. and Aaron K. both agreed this question would need a follow up option to explain or elaborate on their initial response.

Question #4) *Do you feel Hinesburg is headed in a positive direction?*

Maggie G. said she found this question impossible to answer. Alex W. said it may just give us a "gut-check" or a sense if we need to engage in further discussions to reveal more issues which need to be addressed. Alex W. also asked the Board to consider if they prefer to allow an open answer at the end of the survey vs. a comment allowance on individual questions. The latter option, he said, may make organizing the survey results time consuming. The Board agreed to put a note at the end of Questions #3 & #4 to expound at the end of the survey.

Question #5) *Would you recommend Hinesburg to a friend as a place to live?*

Joe I. said he liked this question. Aaron K. suggested it could work as an earlier question in the survey.

Question #6) *Is Hinesburg developing too fast, too slow, or about the right pace?*

The Board liked this question and left it as is.

Question #7) *With the exception of nearly 100 home occupations, most of Hinesburg's non-residential activity (commercial, industrial, civic) is located in the village area and two separate industrial districts (on Richmond Rd and on Rte. 116 near Hollow Road). Considering the entire town, what do you think of the existing balance of residential and non-residential uses?*

The Board agreed this question was too wordy. They felt this was a good question to replace with Joe I's balance of development question. The Board agreed that the word "mix" might be a better choice than "balance". Joe I. suggested breaking this down to the different areas of town, as well.

Question #8) *Does Hinesburg need more of the following commercial, industrial, civic uses? For the purposes of this question, assume proper vetting/review of any new use regardless of the category.*

The Board liked this question. Aaron K. suggested adding to the answer options to this question the category of Public Art. Maggie G. suggested addressing art in Question #13.

Question #9) *If you could add one specific business or type of business to Hinesburg, what would it be?*

Maggie G. and Joe I. liked this question. Rolf K.'s question suggestion, the Board decided, should be in the Land Use & Economic Development Section of the survey. Joe I. said this might be good to get a feeling on the harbinger of development in the area (i.e., FAHC office in the VNW area). Rolf K. suggested another question to ask people if there are other towns they would like to see emulated here. The Board decided to leave this out as they felt they already had enough questions in this particular survey.

Question #10) *Please rate the importance of the following transportation issues.*

The Board liked question #10. Rolf K. suggested adding Public Transportation to the list of answer options. The Board also agreed to change the language of this question to refer to “*transportation matters*” vs. “*issues.*”

Question #11) *For areas with more traffic and some congestion, what is your impression of the following traffic calming options to improve efficiency and safety for all users (vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists)?*

Neal L. suggested changing the language on one of the answer options to this question to read: “*Narrower roads*” vs. “*Lesser road widths*”.

Question #12) *Should the Town invest in additional or improved infrastructure (e.g., roads, sidewalks, water, sewer, etc.) to attract and/or retain businesses?*

Rolf K. suggested this question be moved to the Land Use & Economic Development section of the survey. After some discussion, the Board decided to eliminate this question.

Question #13) *Which natural/cultural resources should the Town focus its attention on over the next 5-10 years?*

The Board agreed that this question should also have a ranking (top 3) type of answer vs. the matrix option of answers.

Question #14) *What recreational facilities/land did you actually use in the last year here in Hinesburg (private or public)? Check all that apply.*

The Board was okay with this question and made no changes to it.

Question #15) *Which of the above recreational land/facilities are important to you and/or the community?*

The Board was okay with this question and made no changes to it.

Question #16) *How well does Hinesburg’s municipal government listen to and consider community feedback?*

The Board was okay with this question and made no changes to it.

Question #17) *If you wanted to participate, share an idea, or raise a concern, do you feel Hinesburg’s municipal government is open to you?*

The Board agreed to eliminate question #17 from the survey.

Question #18) *Do you feel more municipal services are needed beyond what is currently provided?*

The Board was okay with question #18. Joe I. suggested an option in the answer portion of this question to express “too much”.

Question #19) *Town budgets are typically tight, and property tax burdens are often cited as a number one concern by many community members. With that said, the community still considers the need for new and/or improved services from time to time. Please indicate the level of need for the following potential new or improved municipal services.*

The Board was okay with this question and made no changes to it.

Question #20) *What fiscal mechanisms should the Town explore to help pay for services without complete reliance on basic property taxes? Check those you feel warrant investigation or hold the best potential.*

Maggie G. questioned what exactly are we trying to learn from this question? The Board discussed and decided to eliminate the question altogether as a precautionary measure to avoid uninformed responses.

Question #21) *What part of Hinesburg do you live in? (map provided)*

The Board was okay with this question and made no changes to it.

Question #22) *How long have you lived, worked, or owned property in Hinesburg?*

The Board was okay with this question and made no changes to it. Maggie G. suggested making the last two survey questions #22 & #23. Aaron K. suggested an additional question regarding what is one thing you think Hinesburg does *well*. The Board was in favor of this idea. Maggie G. suggested a mirror question, such as “*What is the one thing you would change about Hinesburg?*”

Aaron K. offered some wordsmithing of the introduction of the survey. Rolf K.’s suggested question regarding Energy Independence was added to the survey in Question #2.

### **Minutes of the May 14 & May 28, 2014 Meetings**

The Board agreed to table minutes due to the late hour. Minutes from the 5/14 & 5/28 meetings will be reviewed at the next Planning Commission meeting (6/25).

### **Other Business**

- Shelburne Town Plan revision notice – public hearing on July 10
- AT&T wireless telecommunication facility upgrade (existing facility on silo on Leavensworth Road) - Public Service Board application has been filed

Maggie G. made a **motion to adjourn**. Rolf K. **seconded the motion**. The Board voted **5-0**. The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Freeda Powers--Recording Secretary

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