Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission
May 27, 2015
Approved 6/10/15

Members Present: Dennis Place, Maggie Gordon, Aaron Kimball, Joe Iadanza, Kyle Bostwick, Russell Fox. Rolf Kielman arrived at 8:16pm.

Members Absent: none.

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

Public Present: Chuck Reiss, Mary Beth Bowman, John Kiedaisch, Catherine Goldsmith, James Donegan, Jan Blomstrann.

Joe I. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:34pm.

There were no changes to the agenda.

New Development "Pause": (Ct'd discussion from 4/22, 5/13)

The Board continued their discussion on whether or not to recommend to the Select Board to implement interim zoning in order to step back and tweak the bylaws in place now for increased specificity and to incorporate local feedback. Some concerns have been voiced regarding the interim zoning proposition; once we get in, how to get out, a time frame, where to apply, etc.

Maggie G. said she is in favor of recommending interim zoning. She said it seems the Town can not plan for density, etc. in the village until infrastructure capacity is known (possibly another 1-1/2 yrs.). She feels we should take a look at density again.

Aaron K. said it is important to think about what needs to happen—what is the objective of the pause? We are discussing finite resources such as water and wastewater, and how we want the Village Growth Area (VGA) to develop. Our job is to guide that development. He is in favor of recommending interim zoning but says we should go in with our eyes wide open and acknowledge that we are signing up for a lot of "homework" as it were. Joe I. said the earlier zoning didn't consider these finite resources and we must also realize that either way, we may not reach full build-out, and would need to deal with how to salvage the interconnectivity with large anchor developments in the village and at Ballards Corners. Aaron K. agreed. Joe I. said as a Board, we are fully committed to the Town Plan, but other projects would need to take a back seat if we were to enact interim zoning and address these issues. The Select Board is controlling the wastewater, so the real question, Joe said, is what are the true advantages and disadvantages of interim zoning? Without interim zoning, he said, the wastewater limitations are the only thing to hold up new applications.

Kyle B. said what is the process for larger projects that take up more water or wastewater than we have in current capacity? Alex W. said that would result in a denial by the DRB.

Joe I. said if the charge is to change the zoning bylaws in the village to prevent no net effect because we've allowed the DRB process to continue, interim zoning gives us the freedom and the maximum use

of the bylaws we create. The downside is that this is another stop to the development process and we are turning over to the Select Board work which increases their burden and then there are the legal considerations if they make any exceptions. He also acknowledged Aaron's point of the increase workload for the Commissioners.

Dennis P. said the big question is regarding wastewater capacity. Joe I. said there is also community concerns on the table. He said we should consider, too, as Aaron said, the finite nature of these resources which should be a part of the planning considerations. Dennis P. said we should consider, too, the specificity of the percentage of mixed use within Master Plans. Joe I. agreed.

Maggie G. said per prior discussions of allowing limitations of capacity to determine planning vs. planning with the assumption that there will be more capacity in the future, spotty development as a potential result should be considered. Joe I. said to him, interim zoning is separate and bigger than just the wastewater issue; they are related but different. Also, he said, a second shot at soliciting community involvement and making corrections could be seen as an additional benefit of interim zoning.

Aaron K. said this conversation gets back to the basic question of what does a rural character village look like? What are we aiming for? He voiced the importance of having a unified vision. Alex W. said he agrees, but feels that there is not a clear picture: is it just about pacing or is it about the developments themselves? There was some discussion regarding large land parcels resulting in so few developers determining the village and also some discussion about the importance of development to support such things as public transportation and affordable housing.

There was some discussion about language referring to commercial development and whether this referred to retail, small scale stores vs. long-term high-paying career oriented jobs.

Joe I. said phasing may be in order; we thought it would happen naturally. We need to reconsider what we want Ballards Corners to the Village to look like.

The discussion was opened to the public.

Jan B. (owner of Renewable NRG Systems) spoke from the audience, voicing her concern about the broad brush approach of a moratorium vs. individual project review. She asked the Board to consider the costs in time and money spent by developers with Master Plans and the potential for unintended consequences as those costs can be wasted. There seems to her to be disconnect between the desire to have job growth etc. and a moratorium.

John K. spoke from the audience, voicing his concerns on a number of levels. He feels there is a misconception here; the quality of the proposed development on the Bisonnette land is the consideration. He said we appreciate proper development which considers use of the land, job opportunities, etc. This is not strictly about the wastewater capacity. We need to use the Official Map more, he said. He would like the Select Board to put money towards town planning guidance in other areas such as economic development, land use, wildlife, etc. Prior work was done sincerely and with the notion of creating a good place to live, he said, referring to the 2005 Town Plan work. He said we need the expertise and guidance of how to do it. He encourages interim zoning and asked where to apply it?

Joe I. said ultimately, the Select Board decides if so and what the bounds are. Rolf K. said the Select Board becomes in effect a defacto DRB. Alex W. said interim zoning and existing zoning are separate and clarified that the Select Board only reviews if a project applies to them, and there are special criteria that the Select Board can use to determine.

Chuck R. spoke from the audience, saying he is also in favor of interim zoning to stop a back-log of applications. He suggests allowing X number of units to be built or permitted each year.

Mary Beth Bowman spoke from the audience, saying she agrees with Chuck R. and spoke to Jan B. saying the proposal currently in front of the DRB by Renewable NRG Systems creates jobs, and we don't want to let projects like that go. The recent residential boom seems to be where some people got greedy, she said. She said we should pick what is good and allow those projects to go through. Jobs are a major priority, she said.

James Donegan spoke from the audience, asking if we have capacity for the projects currently proposed. Joe I. said no. James D. said then interim zoning should be in place.

Joe I. asked, if we do recommend to the Select Board interim zoning, how does that look? What to include and where to apply the interim zoning was discussed.

Joe I. made a **motion that the Planning Commission forward a letter to the Select Board recommending interim zoning to be applied in light of limited wastewater and the need to rethink future zoning. The interim zoning should create a moratorium on new development in the village growth area with the following exceptions: 1) Expansion of existing residential uses in the village area, 2) Uses that do not increase wastewater usage, 3) Accessory apartments, 4) Uses which are allowed within the Village North East. 5) New small residential development.** Rolf K. **seconded the motion.** After further discussion, the motion was tabled to the June 11 meeting so that Joe I. and Alex W. could prepare a draft recommendation letter for consideration prior to voting. A straw poll was taken, and all seven commissioners expressed support for an interim zoning development moratorium with the proper caveats or exemptions.

Town Plan Update: The Board agreed to table this discussion due to the late hour.

Minutes from 5/13: The Board agreed to table minutes due to the late hour.

Other Business: The Select Board adopted the storm water revisions and they will be in effect 21 days after 5/18/15.

Joe I. made a **motion to adjourn.** Dennis P. **seconded** the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Freeda Powers, Recording Secretary