

**Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission
September 9, 2015**

Approved 9/23

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

Members Absent: Jeff French.

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

Public Present: Rob Farley

Joe I. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:30pm.

There were no changes to the agenda.

Public Comments for Non-agenda Items: Rob F. asked about previous discussions regarding storm water and possible risk-level assessment for individual projects. He said in particular he is interested in the state guides regarding erosion control and LID practices and how to incorporate these better so that engineers don't have to demonstrate to the DRB. He questions the cost of the required engineering to landowners and asks can we meet this intention with other means? Joe I. said he understands but to evaluate and ensure plan adherence, we should rely on the experience of experts. Russell F. asked in the same vein, how will the Town keep pace with the state if more cost effective ways are found? Joe I. said we remain adaptive as a Planning Commission. Russell F. voiced his concern with a volunteer DRB making decisions and judgments on expert submissions and feels that the Zoning Administrator role should play some part in applying and understanding the expertise. Alex W. said the Planning Commission did recommend Mitch Cypes to the Select Board, noting his experience as an engineer.

Village ReZoning; Better Defining Mixed Use: Kyle B. asked what do we want to accomplish? Joe I. said we would like to come up with a definition of Mixed-Use or arrange enough for the DRB to evaluate a proposal and determine if it meets the vision of the town plan—a quantitative guide for the DRB which specifies the percentage of assigned use. Maggie G. said also to clarify how much mixed (i.e., residential on this block, light industrial over there vs. comingled uses). Joe I. said that is a great point and should absolutely be part of the discussion; a comingling and what does that mean? Dennis P. said he feels that putting in specific percentages feels to him like we are at that point designing the site too much. Joe I. said he feels we are trying to avoid segregated uses. Rolf K. asked if we know what percent of mix is in the existing uses. Maggie G. reviewed her findings from her recent informal survey.

Kyle B. said, to Dennis' point, are our zoning districts vast enough that having industrial here, residential there is an issue? This is not overall a walkable area here, consider them almost as "mini-zones" he said. He asked if we have looked to other towns to see if there is an underlying formula that works well. Maggie G. offered a reminder from the Form Based Code lesson; one size does not fit all. Kyle B. replied that in the details yes, that might be true, but as a larger picture i.e., use categories, we might be able to have those conversations. Dennis P. said we need to be able to back up any numbers we throw out there. Russell F. said these are moving targets we're talking about and asked, do we really want fixed

percentages in any area? Dennis P. clarified that uses can and will change. Alex W. said this gets into a discussion about allowed uses vs. what an area is capable of supporting. Rob F. voiced his concern with mixed use as it becomes a hodge-podge of development. He said we want to establish a pattern of where things go and consider the compatibility therein as well. Consider traffic impacts of one use upon the others, etc. There are surely potential conflicts to avoid. Joe I. said zoning in general tries to avoid conflicts and acknowledges that the Board considers that not all uses are compatible. Russell F. said it is important to consider also where businesses want to be—Main Street. Maggie G. said that goes back to the previous idea of zoning with “drive-to” planning. Russell F. recalled a comment by Peter Erb regarding diversity of uses to enhance a community. He suggested considering parcels for uses/home businesses that are growing into that next step or stage of growth. There was some discussion about home occupations and that while the state permits them by right there are some home owners associations which can forbid or restrict them. The Board also discussed the differences between cottage industry (rural lots) and home occupations (denser village area) and the overall need for more “incubator space” for such businesses to allow them to grow and stay local.

James D. noted the development phases of Hinesburg Center, LLC. He pointed out that while the Creek Side neighborhood (dense residential) is adjacent to the Kinney Drug (commercial & mixed use) development, they still feel very segregated. This led the Board to further discussion about how (or whether) to encourage more integration and the layout of uses; how uses interplay and also their commutability impact.

Russell F. suggested they consider a range of percentages of uses which flex or change as you approach the village. Maggie G. said this is a good point—flexibility in design. Russell F. said allows some latitude for developers; a range could give opportunities for alternating flow of uses. Joe I. said he feels a range is going to be required vs. fixed numbers. There is a need to remain flexible to respond to a changing balance of needs. The Board discussed other drivers to development i.e., wastewater and other resources, and phased development. Kyle B. said he sees the challenge in making this issue more black and white for the DRB. Joe I. said it is possible with a bylaw to address what services the Town needs; a priority list for the Town to grow, not what developers need. He said in this way we can target elements we want. Dennis P. asked how to determine how much we want and how to disperse it? Kyle B. said we can't ignore the market based impact on development as well. Alex W. said larger buildings with lots of parking available allow for more flexibility (i.e., Pine Street in Burlington). Current regs in this regard, he said, are very restrictive. Kyle B. said location also plays a role in flexibility of uses—not just the physical structure or parking. Rolf K. said he does not feel that this is a matter of a formula but rather of a set of guiding principles in a general statement of mixed uses. In some ways, he said, it is a question of how to reinforce the existing pattern. Alex W. said he feels that the regs have a lot of guiding principles and suggested the Board also consider lot size impacts on potential other uses as well. Russell F. suggested considering what building components could be used towards potential future uses also (i.e., loading dock, etc). Rolf K. agreed, saying a coherent exterior space is another ingredient in the mixed-use formula.

Joe I. summarized the discussion as: 1) How to create a mix, 2) How closely knit that mix should be 3) How to point developers to what the community feels is important for growth.

Russell F. said to him mixed-use describes structural components; if the driving factor is residential, then increase the mixed use space and incentivize the development you want to balance that. Additionally,

he said, consider roads as well (i.e., light industry). This led to a brief conversation amongst the Board about how to define light industry. Aaron K. suggested such points as noise, smell, activity, as impact factors to consider.

Minutes from 8/12/15: Maggie G. made a motion to approve the minutes of 8/12. Aaron K. seconded the motion. Kyle B. and Russell F. abstained. The Board voted 6-0.

Other Business: Maggie G. offered an update on her work on a table for the Fall Festival; the Watershed Alliance has a model available to borrow, the Winooski Conservation Commission has a rainbarrel and instructions, etc. and Linda Patterson from Sea Grant has info available as well. Alex W. mentioned some great hologram boards she could look into as well.

Maggie G. reported on her attendance of Municipal Day and her participation in 4 groups there.

Aaron K. mentioned grants offered through the VNRC for dam removal.

Russell F. mentioned the Select Boards' request to make the storm water regulations easier; he has found a lot of useful information through the Pacific NW regarding storm water. Salem, OR in particular has a stormwater design handbook that he found very informative and he encouraged all other Commissioners to check it out. Alex W. agreed to forward the link.

Joe I. made a **motion to adjourn**. Rolf K. **seconded** the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Freeda Powers, Recording Secretary