

**Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission
April 12, 2017
Approved April 12, 2017**

Members Present: Maggie Gordon, Barbara Forauer, Rolf Kielman, Dennis Place, Joe Iadanza, Jeff French, John Kiedaisch, James Donegan

Members Absent: None.

Public Present: None.

Also Present: Dawn Morgan (Recording Secretary), Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning), Suzanne Mantegna (Interview Candidate), Bryne Riley (Interview Candidate present via speaker phone)

Joe I. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:31 pm.

Agenda Changes: None.

Zoning Administrator Candidates – Interviews

Alex W. said that the search team is recommending two candidates for the Commission to interview. He said that if the Commission approves of one of the candidates at tonight's meeting, the next step would be for them to recommend the candidate to the Select Board for consideration of appointment to the Zoning Administrator (ZA) position. One candidate was present in person at the meeting and the other candidate, who is currently living in Virginia, was present via speaker phone.

• Suzanne Mantegna – 7:30-8:00 pm

The Commission began by introducing themselves to the candidate. Joe I. asked the candidate what most interests her about the ZA position. The candidate said that she is interested in being able to apply her education and experience in interior design and historic preservation.

Maggie G. asked what the candidate anticipates will be the least enjoyable aspect of the position. The candidate replied that zoning regulations can be a touchy subject for some applicants who may believe they have the ability to do certain things, when in fact the regulations won't allow it. The candidate said that this can cause some people to become upset, but that she believes she will get used to working through those situations.

Joe I. acknowledged that this type of situation can come up from time to time and inquired as to what the candidate's approach would be. The candidate said that she would stay calm and make sure the applicant felt that their issues were heard. She went on to say that although the applicant may not get their way, they will hopefully understand the process better.

John K. asked if the candidate could give an example of her conflict resolution skills during her time with the VT Commons School Board of Trustees. The candidate said that she was not permitted to go into too much detail, but discussed a time when they were hiring a new person and the Board needed to agree on one candidate. John K. asked how long she had been with the Board and she said that she was in her 2nd term.

Joe I. asked if the candidate had a preference for working with people or the finer, more technical aspects of her work in interior design and historical preservation. The candidate said that during her time at T. Rowe Price she served as the in-house designer for cubicles and furniture in their new spaces. She said she enjoyed the work because figuring out how everything would fit together was like a puzzle. She also enjoyed working with the people who would be using the new work spaces.

Jeff F. asked if the candidate had ever dealt with regulations in terms of reading, understanding and interpreting how regulations should be applied. The candidate said that she did not have direct experience with reading and interpreting regulations, but at T. Rowe Price it was her role to ensure that spaces were designed in accordance with regulations.

Joe I. asked if the candidate's curriculum had ever touched on form-based code, matching architecture with historic trends while ensuring that new structures remained useful and relevant. The candidate said that it is important that new structures don't look exactly historic. She said that someone looking at the property might not realize that it is not, in fact, historic. She went on to say that ideally, new structures are designed and built in a way to complement existing historic structures around it.

Rolf K. asked the candidate to comment on how she saw herself working with both the interpersonal aspects and the more technical, detailed side of the job. The candidate acknowledged that there would be a learning curve, but said she'd had a chance to review some of the regulations and did not see it as a problem.

Alex W. noted that the job also entails understanding plans and being able to visualize from an application what a structure would look like. He asked if the candidate had any experience with those aspects and the candidate replied that she had experience both with understanding and producing plans. John K. asked what software the candidate was familiar with and the candidate indicated that she was comfortable with Mac and Microsoft software, along with some AutoCAD experience. Alex W. noted that although the position does not utilize AutoCAD very much but does work with GIS software.

Barbara F. asked what greatest strength the candidate felt she brought to the Town. The candidate responded that she brings many different skill sets to the position and believes her insight into historic resources could benefit the Town.

John K. asked about the candidate's availability and the candidate said that she is fairly free right now, with the exception of a few small trips planned over the next few months. John K. asked if there were any professional commitments that she needed to wrap up and she indicated that there were not.

Joe I. asked if the candidate saw the position as short-term, mid-term or long-term. The candidate replied that the position is for a 3-year term so beyond that it would depend on whether the position was a good fit.

Alex W. briefly described for the candidate the working hierarchy between the ZA, the Director of Planning and Zoning and the Planning Commission. The Commission thanked the candidate for her time and Alex W. said that he would contact her once the Commission made their recommendation.

General discussion followed about the interview process. Rolf K. asked who was involved with the interview group. Alex W. said that he and the Town Administrator worked with the first-round of applications and then John K. became involved. Alex W. went on to say that both the Richmond Town Administrator and their Planner were involved as well. John K. noted that they initially spoke with three candidates and it was narrowed down to these two. There was additional general discussion about the two remaining candidates.

• Bryne Riley – 8:00-8:30pm

The candidate was present via speaker phone. Joe I. asked the candidate what portions of the position excited him the most and what portions excited him the least. The candidate said that he had previously lived in Burlington and worked in Charlotte, so was familiar with the area. He went on to say that he is most excited to work with community members.

The candidate said that he is least excited about working with people who may become upset because they do not understand how zoning regulations apply to them, but understands that it will happen from time to time. Joe I. asked how the candidate might handle a situation like that. The candidate said that he would encourage applicants to ask questions before they begin a project. He went on to say that if the applicant has already begun a project then he would politely work through the regulations with them. The candidate indicated that he would try to help applicants understand that he is not specifically targeting them and that he wants their project to be successful while remaining in compliance with regulations.

Rolf K. noted that the candidate's current position involved initiating designs and the ZA position was less rich work, in that he would be primarily reacting to what other people propose. He asked the candidate how he anticipated dealing with the change. The candidate said that he has learned that regulations inform design and that can have an impact on whether or not a project is approved.

Maggie G. asked if the candidate had reviewed any of the Town's regulations and if anything stood out for him. The candidate said that he views ordinances as living documents that are adaptable to change. He went on to say that he does not believe regulations to be "good" or "bad", but simply a framework for him to work within.

James D. asked the candidate if he was applying for other jobs in the area, and if so did he view the ZA position as short term. The candidate said that he grew up in a small town and would like a longer-term position where he and his family could settle permanently in a good and stable environment.

John K. noted that there is a difference in the level of complexity in the position the candidate is currently in, versus the ZA position. He asked the candidate how he anticipated that would affect his level of job satisfaction. The candidate said that he looked forward to getting back to the basics of planning and working directly with the people who are leading a project. He said that his current position is missing the level of interaction that he was used to while working for smaller firms. The candidate went on to say that the majority of his family were dairy farmers or local factory workers, so he is familiar with the concept of doing the same thing day after day until retirement. He said that he looked forward to a job that he can enjoy while building a level of familiarity and trust with community members.

Jeff F. noted that the ZA position could become boring or tedious and asked the candidate how he thought he could overcome that and make it fun. The candidate gave an example of a time when he was asked to do a tedious job and he understood that it was just a part of the job that needed to be done before moving on to more interesting work. He went on to say that he stays active with activities like going to the gym or bike riding. The candidate said that no matter what, any job will have aspects that are not very exciting but that he would appreciate the times when there was a good community interaction such as sharing in the excitement of someone's first home.

Jeff F. asked what about the job excites the candidate and the candidate responded that he was excited about the interaction with people. Joe I. asked the candidate if, from the developer's side, he had ever had a bad experience and how he would have handled it differently. The candidate said that those projects usually involved developers who would be upset about comments from the Planning Commission. He said that his role was to then walk the developer through the regulations to help explain the aspects of the project the Commission did not agree with.

Joe I. asked the candidate if he had any experience with stormwater zoning. The candidate said he had some experience, but that the projects he worked on have been large enough to involve engineers.

Barbara F. asked the candidate if his wife would consider him a good listener. The candidate said that it depends, but most of the time yes. Barbara F. noted that the candidate graduated from a college of environmental science and forestry and asked how he saw that helping with the ZA responsibilities. The candidate said that the name of the college included those aspects, but his education was specifically in landscape architecture. He went on to say that some of the foundational course work did involve forestry, botany and ecology.

John K. asked about the candidate's availability and the candidate indicated that the first week in June would be ideal. The Commission thanked the candidate for his time and Alex W. said that he would contact him once the Commission made their recommendation.

General discussion followed about both candidates.

Maggie G. made a motion to recommend Bryne Riley to the Select Board for consideration of appointment to the Zoning Administrator position. John K. seconded the motion. The Board voted 8-0.

Public Comments for Non-Agenda Items: None.

Housekeeping Changes – Zoning & Subdivision Regulation Revisions

- Drive through businesses – clarify what types allowed or prohibited

Alex W. said that there was some discussion last year about the need for clarity in what types of drive-throughs are allowed/prohibited. Jeff. F. said that the goal is for a livable/walkable community and drive-throughs are more conducive to a commuter mentality. Maggie G. said that she is inclined to prohibit them entirely, but noted that the Kinney Drug Store already has one for their pharmacy window. It was also noted that there are drive-throughs at both banks. Alex W. said that the regulations currently prohibit drive-throughs for restaurants, with a special allowance for banks.

There was general discussion about the Kinney Drug Store drive-through and the two bank drive-throughs. Joe I. noted that drive-throughs involve significant pavement and are generally spread out areas that are not useful for anything else. He went on to say that they are against density, against pedestrians and against the "village extension" atmosphere that the Commission encourages.

Alex W. said that if drive-throughs are prohibited then the 3 currently existing would qualify as pre-existing, non-conforming conditions. The Commission agreed to prohibit new drive-throughs, with those currently existing qualifying as pre-existing, non-conforming uses. The Commission also agreed to dissolve the bank allowance.

- Retail establishments and convenience stores – collapse these uses or clarify the difference

Alex W. said that current regulations need clarity between “retail shops and stores” and convenience stores, and what is allowed in each zoning district. He suggested either combining them or defining and clearly distinguishing between the two types of uses.

Maggie G. asked why other towns call the uses out separately, and Alex W. said that convenience stores are associated with more frequent stops with a greater impact. John K. asked if the Jiffy and Mobile stations would qualify as convenience stores and Alex W. said that they meet the definition, assuming they are even allowed in those districts. John K. inquired about the store south of the village and Alex W. said that would be a non-conforming use in that district.

Rolf K. said that he is inclined to treat the uses uniformly, saying that the pattern of use for retail stores vary and the general stores of yesterday are the convenience stores of today. Alex W. added that often drug stores are convenience stores, and offered the Kinney Drug Store as an example.

There was general discussion about how best to define retail versus convenience stores. Ideas for criteria involved type of lighting, on-site advertisements, dwell time, traffic patterns, products sold, etc. Alex W. mentioned that if the uses are combined they will both need to meet the same design standards and go through the same levels of review.

Rolf K. asked if Alex W. would be willing to gather some definitions for the Commission to consider and discuss how best to incorporate them into the regulations. Maggie G. agreed that it would be easier. Alex W. agreed and said that he would present them along with the other housekeeping items, noting that it would be the only unresolved case when the Commission reviews the changes at a later meeting.

Village Growth Area – Rezoning & Design Standards (cont'd from 3/22 mtg)

- Official Map Revisions

This item was postponed to the following meeting.

Minutes of 03/22/17 Meeting: Rolf K. **made a motion to approve the 03/22/17 minutes as written.** Maggie G. **seconded the motion.** The Board voted **6-0.** Dennis P. and Barbara F. abstained.

Other Business & Correspondence

Alex W. said that the Select Board has begun reviewing the Town Plan and has gone over Chapters 1, 2, 10 and have talked about the top priority goals. He said they will be working on successive chapters at each meeting through May.

Alex W. said that the Town Administrator gave his 2-month's resignation notice to the Select Board. He said that the Board will be discussing the matter further at Monday's meeting.

John K. said that there will be an event on Green Up Day at the recreation field site, and visitors will have an opportunity to talk with recreation field volunteers. He said that everyone is invited.

Alex W. said that the Select Board has requested a volunteer from the Commission to join the new water/wastewater allocation committee. He said that it is a short-term committee, meeting for approximately 3-4 months. Jeff F. volunteered.

Joe I. **made a motion to adjourn the meeting.** Rolf K. **seconded the motion.** The Commission voted **8-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Morgan, Recording Secretary