

**Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission
July 25, 2018
Approved August 22, 2018**

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

Members Absent: Jeff French

Also Present: Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning), Kate Kelly (Recording Secretary)

Joe I. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:02 PM.

Agenda changes:

Alex W. commented that he will have a couple of correspondence items, which relate to the Williston Town Plan and a proposed Vermont Electric Coop battery station.

Public Comments for Non-Agenda Items: None.

Official Map Revisions:

Alex W. asked what the Commission observed during their July 11 walking tour. Joe I. replied that the walk reinforced that the west side of Mechanicsville Rd. doesn't look like a good place for a park; it is low (would require fill), and sunny with no cover. A bench would be ok, but the east side of Mechanicsville Rd. would be a better park location.

Alex W. asked where they walked – they walked from Town Hall, up Mechanicsville Rd. to the Cemetery and back the same way.

Rolf K. felt that the general sense of the group was that there should be a walking path/right-of-way on the east side of the road that would link up to the trail network further south (Thistle Hill and south). There are some natural waterways that could shape such a route.

Maggie G. commented that maybe a wooded park up near trails might be good. Alex W. clarified where this would be.

James D. arrived at 7:06 PM.

Maggie G. felt the actual location of the park area would need to be addressed with the developer. Alex W. remembered that Maggie G. and John K. felt at the last meeting that the community facility could float within property. He could check with legal counsel about whether a “floating” facility location could work.

Alex W. asked about lot 15. Barbara F. mentioned that the setback from the canal (to development) still needs to be bigger. She felt that there needs to be a more public community facility in the village. Maggie G. mentioned that this is a good location because it is central, with a possibility for mixed use parking lot, and is walkable in a way that library is not (close to village).

Alex W. asked if they noticed/thought anything about which portion of lot 15 would be appropriate for a community facility. Maggie G. said the area closest to the P.O. is the highest. Alex W. replied that it is, but there are wetlands there. He would need to check the wetland delineation, but thought the northwest corner was the best.

Barbara F. asked about the property north of lot 15, that may belong to the town. Alex W. clarified that the town owns a triangular slice east of canal, south of the intersection with Commerce St., and west of Mechanicsville Rd., but not north of Mechanicsville Road (that is Nestech property).

Rolf K. asked about a bench on the triangular corner near the canal. Barbara F. said there is a bench there. Marie G. felt it is not on town property. Discussion ensued about how much this is used.

Rolf K. felt that compared to site F, lot 15 doesn't fall off as dramatically, but gives you the sense it is down from the walkway.

Dennis P. asked about the land between Telcom and other shops. Alex W. mentioned they each own what could be another lot, could be developed some time. Wildflowers were planted there last year. Marie G. mentioned Telecom property is wet. Several thought this might be a good location for a park. Alex W. felt the advantage to lot 15 is that the walkway is on the same side of the road. Joe I. mentioned we would need to add a sidewalk and another bridge to cross. Alex W. noted we are missing a piece of sidewalk on the southeast side of the road. Dennis P. felt it would be easier when coming from the village to have a sidewalk on the southeast side of the road than having to cross Mechanicsville.

Rolf K. felt there is virtue to having little parks where people can sit. Alex W. mentioned the southwest corner of the Mechanicsville Road, Commerce Street intersection is a problem because the space is so narrow, and next to the roads. Marie G. felt if it was landscaped it would be nicer. Rolf K. thought little pieces of land can serve this function if well done. Maggie G. mentioned public art.

Barbara F. asked about possibility of Nestech selling their little square on the north side of Commerce St. Marie G. said they have tried to sell for years. Barbara F. asked if it is big enough for a dog park. Most

felt it was not. Joe I. asked if something could be built there. John K. said our new design standards state that 2000 sq. ft. is the minimum for a park. This is 8000 sq. ft. Alex W. mentioned that at previous meetings, there was discussion about 2000 sq. ft. being too small. John K. felt the minimum is too big. He would like to see small spaces to sit and talk to a friend, and felt we need to have more small parks around town. Alex W. mentioned that in previous discussion, the Commission felt that the park behind Bristol Bakery is unappealing. In his opinion, the reason this Nestech park seems attractive is because it is in the public space, while the Bristol Bakery space feels like it is in the parking lot.

Joe I. agreed that Alex W. hit on a key point, that you need to have a place to invite people in.

Rolf K. mentioned that when the walkway sits adjacent to the road, you feel you are in peril. We need to look at buffers between sidewalk and road. John K. agreed even walking in town on east side feels safer (grass, trees). Rolf K. mentioned an example John K. showed from Burlington with bike lane, trees, etc. This is worthy of attention as we make the map and request how this is implemented.

Alex W. reminded the Commission that we created the sidewalk that goes up Mechanicsville Rd. Rolf K. said we were also dealing with landowners who weren't happy. Alex W. said if we had a public works standard for streetscapes with a representative diagram, it would be useful so that it could be referenced.

Barbara F. asked if we are giving up potential park on west side of Mechanicsville Rd. Alex W. mentioned that he shrunk the area on the west side (labeled F), and made a larger space on the east side. Each lettered property would have an accompanying document with details about the area.

Barbara F. asked if the creek (canal) is very attractive. Alex W. said it doesn't appear very attractive to him. She asked if we could put a trail from this possible park north to the property line then west to NRG.

Rolf K. said the canal was created for an economic purpose, and now it doesn't serve this purpose. What about returning this to its natural form (filling it). He asked if the upward leg from Patrick Brook ends before it reaches the canal. Alex W. clarified this is a mapping error, and there is a water control structure there. Rolf K. asked what would happen if the canal closed? Marie G. asked if people would lose their homes. Maggie G. doesn't see how Patrick Brook could take any more water. Joe I. mentioned this is the backup water supply for the Fire Dept. Marie G. asked about Nestech's fire pond. Discussion ensued about what this would change.

Alex W. replied to Barbara F. that it would be nearly impossible to run a trail through the area north of this lot because of wetlands and flood hazard area here, without a very elevated boardwalk.

John K. mentioned that changing the flow in Patrick Brook would affect the culvert under 116, which is already undersized. Water has already been observed up to the existing roadway, and there has been discussion around this issue as part of the DRB's consideration of the proposed development on lot 15.

Alex W. asked about the second draft of map. He still needs to drop stormwater treatment areas into the map (perhaps on inset or separate map). He made the Commission's changes from the June 27 meeting as requested. Does the Commission have feelings about what should be in the lettered areas?

Dennis P. asked about area G, and adding the area of the potential donation from Quinn family. Alex placed area G there because it could back up to the wooded area, and provide connectivity. Maggie G. and Barbara F. mentioned this property isn't all that usable due to topography and streams. John K. asked if we should have discussion with Cemetery Commission about access to the park. Joe I. said we should place it in a way that is in the village area, and these are public roads. Alex W. said we can either address this on the map, or include it in the notes under area G.

Rolf K. asked about the use for area G. Alex W. proposed it as a public park (tennis court, bocce court, benches and tables, shade trees, play structure). Joe I. was thinking about a picnic shelter, Adirondack chairs, maybe fire pit, parking, bathroom. Rolf K. asked if we need to be that specific (more than public recreation). Alex W. mentioned that with the Hannaford application, the official map wasn't specific enough. It is better to be specific, so that all the areas complement each other. Joe I. mentioned the only other picnic shelter we have is at the school. Rolf K. said a picnic shelter might want to be closer to the road. Joe I. disagreed, and felt up the hill could be nice.

Alex W. proposed discussing each lettered area. The Commission began ideas for each area.

Area A – linear park, shade trees, architectural art, benches, community areas, continuous path or sidewalk separated from 116. John K. suggested moving the red line to other side or middle away from 116. Joe I. suggested speed bumps.

Areas B & C – Alex W. said that these areas reflect the Haystack Crossing proposals. In their proposal, B is narrower than C, and was planned as greenspace with sidewalk and trees. C was deeper so it could accommodate a public facility. Joe I. thought it made more sense to put the public facility in B, so it could share parking with the Bissonette fields. Then C would be for a gazebo/trees park with businesses and housing facing it. Dennis P. thought it was more residential than business in here; Alex W. clarified it is mixed use.

Rolf K. said that in current Haystack Crossing plan, it is mostly fronted by housing in area B (corner buildings at B are mixed use). C is elderly housing, mixed use. Within their plan, the virtue of these spaces is open space, with linkage from 116 to rec fields. He wouldn't see filling these spaces in with a building. Alex W. said he felt a community center could be a modest building. Barbara F. didn't feel a

community center would be modest. Alex W. said he pictured the size of the police station, and he felt this area could accommodate both building and some green space.

Maggie G. felt area B looks like it is in people's back yards, and seems like it wouldn't be very public. Area C (closer to 116) seems more public.

Dennis P. asked if these areas B & C were supposed to be for the landowners there; Alex W. replied that they were proposed as community space.

Rolf K. mentioned that when the sidewalk is at the property line, it makes it more of a public space. The road on other side of the houses is an access lane. John K. asked if we can make it so the front of houses is facing the park.

Dennis P. liked the idea of having the park closer to the rec fields. Maggie G. mentioned a decent sized community center could fit on east side of number 2 in area B. Most felt they'd like to see a community center next to the parking lot south of ball fields. John K. would like to see more connection between public space and this space (doesn't like narrowed down sidewalk between private houses).

Joe I. felt we could take one of residential lots as community center, and cede some of west side of B as commercial space, keeping C like it is.

Maggie G. asked about parking and hours of use of fields (Alex W. replied evenings and weekends). Joe I. felt the community center could be useful for restrooms, etc., and could be used at same time as fields. John K. mentioned the possibility of parking on street also.

Alex W. showed an example of new north end Burlington, Schifilliti Park and Robert Miller Community Center. Discussion ensued about use of a community center.

Dennis P. asked how big the lots are on west side of project. Alex W. said he would have to measure.

Maggie G. said she would like to throw something else into the mix; she doesn't like all the single family homes. Alex W. mentioned we could not control what goes in on a commercial facility, but he could add a community center to the official map if the Commission feels this is a good location.

Discussion ensued about location of houses/access to rec area and parking. Alex W. mentioned it isn't worth arguing details of access. John K. asked if we could extend area B to the west so it touches rec field area.

John K. suggested a wide strip all the way to 116 through Busier property. Alex W. felt it would be hard to put it directly in a straight line to 116 (it would go through the existing house). Dennis P. asked what the benefit would be to connect directly to 116. Maggie G. said there are plenty of sidewalks and paths

to get there from 116. Rolf K. felt it should be mandatory to link linear park to B & C through property. Joe I. said it could meander around border. Marie G. asked about other ways to get through the property.

Joe I. proposed continuing the discussion to the next meeting.

Alex W. said the Trails Committee is coming next time to discuss townwide official map, and what trails should be on it.

Alex W. proposed a discussion next meeting about how to reach out to landowners.

Village Area Design Standards (continued from 6/13, 5/23 meetings):

Alex W. hoped that working on the official map would help inform public open space design standards.

Dennis P. asked about the rumor of fire station moving. Alex W. said there was limited discussion of using fire station as community space if they move to the Tailhook Towing site. Rolf K. felt it the discussion is getting to be more serious. Maggie G. wondered if the Fire Chief should sit in on the DRB Hannaford hearing to realize the traffic line will reach the driveway of Hannaford. Dennis P. asked about if we would want more than one community center if this happened. John K. said that he would caution the town against owning the fire station (due to the roof structure/wall structure/insulation).

Alex W. proposed that Rolf K. reach out to fire station to ask about future community centers. Maggie G. asked Rolf K. about his thoughts on location for community center. He felt putting it next to rec areas makes sense if it's a recreational focus, but if it's serving many constituencies the fire station location makes more sense. On the other hand, a facility within the development makes sense for seniors.

John K. commented on p. 2 of Village Design Standards; he proposed expanding the description of "well designed".

Alex W. is happy to revise and come back with draft 3.

Maggie G. asked if we were just to propose community facilities, park, etc., would this take the place of these standards? Alex W. replied that the official map only requires them to leave space for the facility, but this requires them to make the space functional. Maybe we can tie this in directly to the official map. For properties that have an element of the official map on it, we expect you to develop x% or portion of the space in conjunction with the town. If you don't have official map element, here's the percentage of green space you will need to provide.

Barbara F. commented that this document does address above-ground utility infrastructure. At Kinney, they were not well screened. Alex W. felt they were not well sited. Hopefully this language would improve the outcomes in regard to above-ground utility infrastructure.

Minutes of June 27 and July 11, 2018 Meetings:

Maggie G. **made a motion to approve the minutes of June 27, 2018 as amended.** Barbara F. **seconded.** The Commission voted **6-0.** Rolf K. and Dennis P. abstained.

Rolf K. **made a motion to approve the minutes of July 11, 2018 as amended.** Barbara F. **seconded.** The Commission voted **4-0.** Marie G., Dennis P., John K., and James D. abstained.

Other Business & Correspondence:

Alex W. reported that the Selectboard has formed a committee to improve the allocation process of water/wastewater; they're looking for recommendations by the end of the calendar year. Jeff F. is the Planning Commission representative. The Commission discussed other members of this committee.

Hannaford review will continue at the August 7 DRB meeting. The Planning Commission's comments on the Official Map will be recognized at this meeting; any commissioners could attend to speak to this.

Municipal Planning Grant (annual funding opportunity from the state) – applications are due 10/1/18. Previous years applications have not been funded. Commission should consider the projects we are currently working on, or something additional. Alex W. mentioned they give some priority to statewide priorities (affordable housing, water quality, etc.). John K. asked if Alex W. could email those priorities. Alex W. replied he would.

Williston will hold a hearing on their updated town plan on Aug. 21. Alex W. hasn't read the full plan, but there don't seem to be any problems.

VT Electric Cooperative & Northern Power Systems substation upgrade project. Pending application to Public Utility Commission (PUC) for improvement to the VT Electric Cooperative substation near corner of Pond Brook Rd. and Richmond Rd. Viridity Energy Solutions and Northern Power Systems are proposing an additional area for a battery storage facility on the VT Electric Cooperative property. They are required to notify us 45 days before submitting an application to the PUC. The Planning Commission can make comments directly to the applicant, then they must address these comments in their application to the PUC. Alex W. doesn't feel there is any issue to be concerned about. Barbara F. wondered how large it is. Alex W. said it is a pad with a couple of racks in it, a 75 ft. x 55 ft. rectangular fenced compound. Dennis P. asked if they would cut into the bank significantly here. John K. noted it is a 10 ft. slope from one corner to the other. Alex W. felt even cut and fill isn't a problem, as long as they deal appropriately with erosion control. John K. noted the neighbors would notice it, and others driving

on the road would. Alex W. mentioned screening requirements, and it may be worth commenting on this. John K. asked if it is the same company as the one that did solar panels on Magee Hill. Alex W. replied it is all associated with VEC.

Marie G. mentioned that Green Mountain Power will likely be bringing 3-phase power down to Clifford Lumber and Hinesburg Sand & Gravel in the Industrial 1 zoning district, and it won't be accessible to Clifford Lumber after 5 PM at peak times. Alex W. mentioned that the extension of 3-phase power is a positive thing. The Planning Commission in the past has thought that the Industrial 1 district is underutilized, and this could help. Rolf K. asked what the advantage is of 3-phase power. Marie G. said they have to generate their own power to run equipment using fuel oil. Alex W. said current lines don't carry enough electricity to power all the machinery, including at sand and gravel operation.

Joe I. made a motion to adjourn, John K. seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Kelly, Recording Secretary