



Town of Hinesburg  
Planning & Zoning Department  
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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Town Administrator  
**FROM:** Director of Planning & Zoning  
**DATE:** October 14, 2015  
**RE:** FY2017 Planning & Zoning Budget – DRAFT 1

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Please see the attached FY17 planning and zoning budget proposal spreadsheet for the first draft of my baseline budget proposal that maintains the level of service between FY16 and FY17. See below for larger projects (proposed and ongoing) and further explanation of the budget proposal.

### FY17 Proposed Projects

1. **Zoning Regulations, Complete Overhaul** (\$4,500) – new funds combined with capital reserve and presumed grant funds to hire a consultant to assist
2. **Shoreline District Zoning** (no funds allocated) – finish effort begun in 2013 – if time allows
3. **Rural Residential 1 District Zoning** (no funds allocated) – same as above
4. **Official Map update** (no funds requested) – if time allows

### FY16 Current Year Projects

#### Planning Commission Projects

- **Town Plan Update** (no funds allocated) – forward to Selectboard March 2016
- **Village Growth Area Zoning** (no funds allocated) – timing dependent on wastewater study results
- **Shoreline District Zoning** (no funds allocated) – began January 2013
- **Rural Residential 1 District Zoning** (no funds allocated) – began Jan 2013

#### P&Z Department Projects

- **Richmond Rd Pedestrian/Bicycle Feasibility Study** (\$4,500, Special Projects) – local match for CCRPC funding – complete May 2016

#### Development Review Board Projects

Unpredictable, major projects include:

- **Hinesburg Center Phase Two** (69 dwelling units plus non-residential uses)
- **Black Rock, Haystack Crossing** (200+ dwelling units plus non-residential uses) – denied; on appeal to Env. Court
- **Wind Energy Associates** (101 dwelling units plus non-residential uses)

#### Selectboard Projects

- **Town Plan Update** (no funds allocated) – work with SB after March 2016
- **Hannaford Court Case** (no funds allocated; Town Attorney costs ongoing) – court process underway; start of trial planned for Nov/Dec 2015

## **Zoning Regulations – Complete Overhaul:**

For the last few years, we have been putting aside funds in a P&Z capital reserve to pay for a consultant to assist with a comprehensive overhaul of the Zoning Regulations. FY17 is the year to pursue this project, if we can leverage grant funding. We would combine the proposed \$4,500 in the FY17 budget (Special Projects line item) with the \$7,500 in capital reserves. Total project cost could be \$25,000 or more. Hence the need for grant funding in addition to our Town funds. Without grant funding, we may have to delay, and continue saving funds for a couple more years.

The problem is that after 40 years of tacking on new provisions and adjusting other existing provisions, I feel that our Zoning Regulations are overly complicated, difficult for people to understand, frustrating for us to administer, and likely to collapse under their own weight. My goals for this future effort are to make the regulations shorter, simpler, and easier to understand. I'd like to add graphics, drawings, and other visuals to better explain standards/goals – i.e., add a picture, delete 1,000 words. I'd also like to use this effort to consider a unified bylaw (combines Zoning and Subdivision Regulations), and possibly to consider form-based codes for the village growth area.

## **Capital Budget:**

The project we've been putting aside capital reserves for is proposed for FY17 and described above. As a result, no funds are proposed for capital transfer in FY17.

## **Revenue Projection:**

Actual revenues from zoning permits, DRB fees, and compliance statements (Bianchi statements) came in below our projection for FY15. Zoning permit revenue in particular was about 40% lower than we projected, and about 30% lower than the previous 5-year average. Without resolution to the municipal wastewater capacity issue, and particularly without additional municipal water supply, I see this trend continuing. Zoning permits constitute the bulk of our P&Z revenue. Given that, my revenue projection for FY17 is \$10,000 below the current year – i.e., \$32,500 instead of \$42,500.

## **5% Budget Reduction:**

The proposed FY17 budget is a 1.8% increase over FY16. Achieving a 5% decrease from FY16 is extremely difficult given that 90% of the P&Z FY16 budget goes to personnel (salaries & FICA), and 4% goes to dues (CCRPC, GBIC). Taking 5% out of the remaining budget is tough when we have non-negotiable expenses for ads/notices, mileage, supplies, etc. A 5% decrease from the FY16 budget of \$185,675 would be an FY17 budget of \$176,392 – a decrease of about \$9,300. In reality, the decrease needs to be even more than that in order to account for necessary increases – e.g., cost of living pay increases to hourly P&Z staff, CCRPC dues increase, etc. The only way to accomplish this would be to make the three changes below:

1. Reduce the Director of Planning & Zoning position to a 35 hour/week position – Savings, \$8,400 (salary & FICA) – Impacts: continued delays on planning projects, regulation revisions, etc.; less service to residents and Town committee volunteers; potential staff turnover.

2. Eliminate Professional Services line item – Savings, \$2,000 – Impacts: inability to hire professional consultants for when needed for unforeseen issues (wetland delineation, engineering review, build out analyses, etc.); the DRB can require that applicants pick up costs for independent review, so this would impact services for the Planning Commission, the P&Z office, etc. Difficult to predict if/when this will be needed.
3. Reduce Special Projects line item – Savings, \$2,000 – Impacts: potential lack of adequate funds for complete zoning regulation overhaul project; potential delay of this project another year or two; continued regulatory inefficiencies and an inability to clearly convey community development standards.

### **Important projects/funding recommended for other departments**

#### **Town Administrator/Selectboard:**

- Capital budget & plan update
- Water & Wastewater allocation system
- Local match for Route 116, Charlotte Rd intersection improvement (amount??)
- Village infrastructure impact fees

#### **Buildings and Facilities:**

- Local match for sidewalk construction grants (VTrans bike/ped, VTrans transportation alternatives, CCRPC bike/ped, etc.). We have cost estimates ready.
  - Village North Sidewalk phase 2 – from Riggs Road to CVU Road
  - Route 116 – east side from Mechanicsville Road to Commerce Street
  - Route 116 south from HCS to Buck Hill Road – Area 3 from 2014 study
  - Mechanicsville Road (east side) in front of Hinesburg Village Center Plaza – Area 1 from 2014 study
  - Cheese Plant Property – Area 2 from 2014 study
- Local match for bike/pedestrian planning grants – CCRPC Unified Planning Work Program. To study and develop cost estimates needed for future construction grants. Per suggestion from Trails Committee.
  - Charlotte Road – entire

#### **Highway:**

- Funds for design and construction of the new Town Highway Garage and overall site (including CSWD transfer station)