

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 1, 2022

Members Present: Kevin Anderson (online), Bob Cook (online), AnnMarie Harmon (online), Alice Peal (online), Steve Shea (online), Brian Voigt (online)

Members Absent: Emma Hanson

Staff Present: JB Weir, Planning & Zoning Administrator

Others Present: None

II. Regular Business.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

2. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items.

No revisions were made to the agenda.

3. Public Forum.

There was nobody present requesting to address the Commission.

4. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of October 18, 2022 were approved.

5. Wastewater and Water Feasibility Study Update

Alice provided a report on the recently held Community Meeting, noting that 25 – 30 people were in attendance and that the reactions/feedback to the information presented was generally very positive. She indicated that there was interest expressed in proceeding with water system hookups ASAP, and that she will again raise of discussion regarding possible ARPA funding for this work in this week's subcommittee meeting.

AnnMarie proposed that more publicity be provided prior to the December informational meeting related to the 90% report, using flyers, posters, and more frequent FPF postings.

Alice informed the group that the criteria for DEC's Intended Use Plan funding has changed, and now includes criteria related to a municipality's median income. She has been reviewing census data to determine what is the accurate median for Waitsfield, and will be seeking clarification on whether this number is meant to include all residents or only property owners. Alice noted that there are related questions regarding funding for PER work and construction work, and she and JB are working with Jon Ashley and DEC staff to clarify this information, as well as to determine any other potential funding sources for continued wastewater work.

6. Bylaw Modernization Grant Update

The subcommittee had met with representatives of SE Group, who suggested looking at the scope of work in phases and highlighted the importance of community engagement. Kevin noted that it had been emphasized that there should be work completed on the bylaws regardless of the outcome of the wastewater study, and it was suggested that separate deliverables be specified to cover both aspects of this work. He also noted that first steps will include a site visit and data gathering.

Kevin and JB explained that SE Group will prepare a basic contract, and any changes will be made before presentation to the Selectboard for approval.

MOTION: *AnnMarie made a motion to authorize Kevin and JB to review the contract with SE Group and present a final draft to the Selectboard for approval, with the final draft being distributed to all PC members when it is available. The motion was seconded by Steve. All voted in favor.*

7. Town Plan Review and Next Steps

JB had provided a full draft copy, with all the changes to Chapters 4, 9, 11, and 12 included. He noted that there are still some formatting issues he is working on, specifically pointing out the difficulty with changing the page numbers of maps that have been moved from the main content area to an appendix. A couple of changes to be made were noted, including AnnMarie's reminder that some reference material information needs to be added/cleaned up. JB will incorporate these changes, and any others that are brought to his attention, for a more refined version to be available in mid-November for further review.

AnnMarie questioned whether the 2020 data in Table 4.3 should be updated, as it was projected data at the time of the last revision. Alice will look into finding relevant data for this.

JB will also provide a draft of the accompanying report and an outline of the adoption timeline to the next meeting, and will forward a draft copy to the RPC and Selectboard. It was decided to potentially move the first January PC to January 10, and warn a public hearing for that date.

8. Bylaw Revisions Roundtable

- a) Review letter from Steve McKenzie
- b) Discuss input to/with the DRB regarding Bylaws

Alice provided examples of recent DRB hearings where she had noticed that Town Plan intent did not appear to have been carried over into specific regulatory language. One instance was the review of a proposed bike hub/restaurant/hotel in the Adaptive Redevelopment Overlay District at which the applicant wanted to include some retail operations. Alice indicated that the Town Plan's description of the District would allow for some retail, but that retail is not included as either a permitted or conditional use in that District. Mr. Voigt noted that, in the Town Plan, limited commercial activity is allowed as a permitted or conditional use but no mention is made of retail. Another example provided is the more detailed description of scenic road considerations in the Town Plan compared to the standards outlined in the LURs.

It was agreed that this is work outside the scope of the bylaw modernization project, and there was some discussion regarding ensuring the intent of the PC as included in the Town Plan has been translated accurately and completely into the LURs. The possibility was raised of including references to the Town Plan language where it would be appropriate in order to provide guidance to the DRB.

JB and Alice will reach out to the DRB to determine where there are areas lacking clarity, and invite them to attend a PC meeting for further discussion of this matter.

9. Other Business

- a) VOREC Bike Path proposal – It was noted that the Selectboard has put the proposed

path plans on hold until VTrans completes the Route 100/17 study, and that they have suggested that alternative routes be investigated.

b) GMT Winter Bus updates – Alice reported that the bus is going back to full service this year, with the biggest increase in use/stops expected on the Valley floor.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary