

**TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**  
**Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, November 7, 2023**

**Members Present:** Kevin Anderson, Beth Cook, Bob Cook, Emma Hanson, Alice Peal, Jonathan Ursprung

**Members Absent:** AnnMarie Harmon

**Staff Present:** JB Weir, Planning and Zoning Administrator

**Others Present:** None

**II. Regular Business.**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Alice. 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 changes were made to the agenda.

**3. Public Forum.**

Nobody requested an opportunity to address the PC.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of October 17, 2023 were approved.

**5. Draft Zoning Bylaws**

Review changes by SE Group –Kevin reported that he had found some changes needed for the draft Bylaws, including some edits to Appendix A and some grammatical fixes that he had pointed out to JB. It was also observed during the meeting that there is a problem with some of the numbering, which JB will address. Some other minor issues were brought forward for editing.

It was agreed to remove the prohibition of a person serving on both the DRB and the PC, as there is no statutory reason to preclude the dual appointments.

The Zoning District map changes were reviewed next. It was noted that the Flood areas were not included and should be added. The three parcels were added to the Village Residential District as discussed (the school, the garden center, and one residence). Kevin suggested some color changes to increase readability, as well as some minor changes to the legend. Bob noted that the Historic Village Overlay is difficult to discern. It was agreed to name this the Town of Waitsfield Zoning Map. Other versions were discussed that are needed or that would be helpful, these include a user-friendly online version and a large version format for the Zoning Office, with a signature block for the Selectboard. JB offered to request that Brian Voigt send him the shape file data, and Alice indicated that she will reach out to CVRPC to ensure that the changes are incorporated as soon as possible, preferably before the first public hearing.

Bylaw Adoption Process/Schedule – The logistics were reviewed, and it was determined that there should be time for the necessary warnings and communications to take place to allow for a hearing

at the December 5 PC meeting. This will be followed by a Selectboard hearing, likely at one of their January meetings.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Kevin to approve the draft Zoning Bylaws as modified at the November 7 Planning Commission meeting to address formatting and to remove the prohibition on an individual being appointed to both the Planning Commission and Development Review Board, and to move forward with scheduling a Public Hearing for adoption of the Bylaws. The motion was seconded by Emma, all voted in favor.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Kevin to approve the draft Town of Waitsfield Zoning Map prepared by CVRPC, modified as agreed upon at the November 7 Planning Commission meeting to include the SFHA and FEH and other minor changes including increasing the contrast between the Village Districts, and to move forward with the adoption process in conjunction with the adoption of the Zoning Bylaws. The motion was seconded by Jonathan, all voted in favor.

## **6. Municipal Planning Grant (MPG)**

JB report that this application has been submitted. He and AnnMarie met with the Fayston Selectboard; they were supportive of the consortium application. Joshua Schwartz helped finalize the application, and AnnMarie collected multiple letters of support to include in the submission. Notification of awards will take place by the end of November.

Alice reminded the group of AnnMarie's proposal to form a steering committee for this work, to include PC members as well as members of the public and others. Alice suggested that a Downstreet representative be included, as well as a Selectboard member and potentially a representative for the Seniors group.

JB confirmed that a meeting with Arrowwood was part of the process for writing the application, and their feedback led to a planned focus on enhancement of existing wetlands, with possible expansion, rather than focusing on expansion, which is more difficult. He noted that Alex Belenz was helpful in completing the financial sections of the application.

Alice noted that the Winooski Basin Tactical Plan is being updated, and that the State's Wetlands Program is in the process of remapping all wetlands. This may lead to more grant opportunities for wetlands work.

## **7. Wastewater Planning Project Update**

JB and Bob explained some of the differences in the two types of systems which had been included in Jon Ashley's cost analysis prepared for the CWSRF program, explaining that DEC prefers to finance STEP/STEG systems where there are septic tanks at individual properties rather than moving both solids and wastewater to the disposal site. He noted that the group continues to support the alternative, known as the Neighborhood STEP system, where all waste is sent to tanks at the disposal field site, as the STEP/STEG system is more suited to areas with a heavier residential focus and the administrative aspects of that type of system setup may be costly.

A final document is expected from Jon Ashley on November 15.

JB also noted that the appeal related to income determination for the service area is under review by DEC's Tom Brown. He explained that information gleaned in a meeting with USDA's Rural

Development program to discuss potential funding indicated that their affordability criteria is to a great extent satisfied by the service area's median income levels, which may potentially support a positive decision from DEC.

Joshua Schwartz's next update report will be available in time for the November 13 Selectboard meeting.

## **8. Other Business**

Ridge to Rivers Report – Alice reported that she and AnnMarie both attended a recent meeting; the focus of this group is now climate change. They are striving to bring related activities to the community level, promoting actions which may be taken by individuals.

LHMP Update – Alice pointed out information in the meeting packet, indicating that two public meetings will be scheduled, one to gather input and one to present the plan. Fred Messer has been involved in this work, and the final Plan will require FEMA approval.

Possible future presentations – Alice indicated that as the Bylaw work winds down, she intends to invite various individuals to provide presentations on planning matters to the PC. She mentioned Jamey Fidel, covering parcelization, and Ned Swanberg, covering streams and rivers, as two potential speakers. She also pointed out that the packet contained information about several webinars scheduled in the coming weeks.

Kevin asked that a draft of the report to accompany the Public Hearing announcement for the Bylaws be ready for review at the November 21 meeting, and that the agenda for that meeting include outlining the structure of the Hearing.

## **9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary