

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**PRELIMINARY MINUTES**

**February 15, 2022**

**6:00 PM  
Zoom Meeting**

Ludlow Planning Commission

Feb 15, 2022 06:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87387936899?pwd=eG5DTUFENjd3Tyt0T2ZPdWc3bW9zQT09>

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Alan Couch, Chairman

Terry Carter

Ryan Silvestri

Ted Stryhas

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Phoebe Tucker

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Rose Goings

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Eric Alden

Meredith Milliken

Patrick Cody – Okemo Valley TV

Andrea Goldman

Jason Rasmussen

Alison Hopkins

**I. CALL TO ORDER – ELECTRONIC MEETING GUIDELINES**

1. Alan Couch called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. He advised that the Electronic Meeting Guidelines are still in effect. Members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely.

**II. ROLL CALL**

1. Alan Couch did a roll call of the board. All members are present, except Phoebe Tucker.

III. **CONSIDERATION OF ANY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR REMOVALS TO THE AGENDA**

1. Jason Rasmussen noted that under Agenda Item #6, the 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet should read “Objectives” not “Objections”.

IV. **APPROVE MINUTES**

1. Alan Couch advised that the minutes to be approved are from the meeting of November 16, 2021.
2. **MOTION by Ryan Silvestri and seconded by Terry Carter to approve the minutes from November 16, 2021 as amended. Motion unanimously.**

V. **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

1. Eric Alden said he would make his comments under “Other Business.”.

VI. **BYLAW MODERNIZATION GRANT**

1. Alan Couch advised they had received a grant with the assistance of Jason Rasmussen and Rose Goings.
2. Jason Rasmussen said that Ali Hopkins would be assisting the board with this Phase II grant. The intent is to focus on housing and streamlining the permitting process. He hopes that they will be able to continue with the work from the grant work done last year. It was a Municipal Planning Grant used for mostly for the Village RC district and zoning there. They concentrated on Main Street from bridge to bridge. He suggested they continue to work in the RC district, possibly changing the map and also look at the Village Residential and Preservation districts.

- **SCHEDULE**

- A. Jason Rasmussen advised that they have 2 years to complete the work covered by this grant.
- B. He would like to schedule the kick-off meeting tonight and in the March meeting.
  - 1) They will review the schedule and details

- **REVIEW TASKS**

- A. Jason Rasmussen said that the grant calls for public outreach, possibly to housing providers, businesses and property owners
- B. There may be zoning updates
- C. There will be public meetings to get feedback

- **OBJECTIVES**

- A. Jason Rasmussen said once work is completed, they will finalize a draft and prepare it for final adoption.
3. Ryan Silvestri asked if this would also include outside the bounds of the village RC district.
4. Jason Rasmussen said yes. He thinks they may look at the rest of the RC district as well as the Preservation District. He asked if they still need the Preservation district. They can look at dimensional standards and revisions for housing.
5. Terry Carter asked if the changes that the board worked on under the previous grant will be sent to the Select Board and trustees.
6. Jason Rasmussen suggested that the board revisit them and decide if they make sense. Then, they could forward them on.
7. Rose Goings said they should look at what they worked on and see how it works, see if they want to move forward. They can try to get it adopted or may decide to do it piece meal.
8. Alan Couch said he agrees. It was relevant last year. He said the mountain and Air B&B are increasing. We need to look at this to see our direction.
9. Ryan Silvestri asked if they could restructure the Preservation District.
10. Rose Goings said it goes from bridge to bridge. It was originally established to keep it the same and no more commercial. No vinyl siding or metal roofs. If owners want to change out windows, it must be done in the character of the home. She said there are a lot of historic buildings there. There is only one building – the red brick – that is on the historic register. She said that VT Historic Society does keep track.
11. Terry Carter said that when it needs repairs, vinyl siding doesn't look good.
12. Alan Couch said that if people want to modernize, they have to budget their funds. If vinyl doesn't look bad, they can repair it. He said they should look at the rules in the Preservation district – depending on the funds available under this grant. This grant is for modernizing the bylaws.
13. Jason Rasmussen said the objective of the grant can address ski traffic, air B&Bs and making the processes more streamlined for housing. He will be handing phase 2 over to Ali Hopkins. He said they have 2 years to complete the grant and asked how they would feel about getting it done faster.
14. Alan Couch said that would be good.
15. Jason Rasmussen said he will get a schedule and details out for their March meeting.

## VII. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Short Term Rentals
  - A. Rose Goings advised that the legislature recently passed a bill for Short Term Rentals. Owners will be charged per unit, a health officer will check the units, to be hired at state level (probably will not be enough of them.) She said that towns with regulations won't be affected by this. If they take the information, towns should have a registry. She said that she will go to the next Select Board Meeting (March 7<sup>th</sup>) and the fire chief will be going with me. She said they recently found a house with 50 people staying there. The house needs a sprinkler system. She said that traffic is increasing and more people are listing their properties on the internet.
  - B. Terry Carter said that when this board last approached the Select Board, they were open, but the Trustees shut us down.
  - C. Rose Goings said that Chief Kolenda will be going to the Select Board. We will talk briefly about this. Things are different now.
  - D. Terry Carter said that the trustees were all about owners' rights.

- E. Rose Goings said we never want to invade privacy, but want to make sure that everyone is safe. This would just be a form for owners to fill out, that will put the onus on the.
  - F. Andi Goldman said the much bigger problem is for affordable housing. She would like to see some of the funds go toward affordable housing.
  - G. Ryan Silvestri said this is a multifaceted issue. He doesn't see how we can tell people how to use their property, but we have to consider fire and health safety. He said that having 50 people in a house could lead to tragedy. If we make regulations, then we need employees to enforce them. He said he will also go to the Select Board Meeting.
  - H. Terry Carter said she would also go to that meeting.
  - I. Eric Alden said he will also go to the meeting, and be vocal. He said that what we are seeing is not acceptable. Homeowners need to know what the conversations are between the town and Okemo. We need to move forward with signs. We need to look at the housing issue and will what this board did last year still work. The Select Board and the Trustees need to look at housing for the workforce.
  - J. Alan Couch asked this board to look at the changes we made last year over the next weeks so that we can review them at our next meeting and see where we want to go from here.
  - K. Terry Carter asked Jason Rasmussen to resend the changes.
  - L. Jason Rasmussen asked the board to also think about accessory dwellings and converting old houses into duplexes for long term housing.
  - M. Rose Goings asked if Ali Hopkins would be coming to future meetings and not Jason Rasmussen.
  - N. Jason Rasmussen said yes, but he will be able to give her backup.
  - O. Rose Goings asked for Ali Hopkins' email and contact information.
  - P. Jason Rasmussen said he will have Ali Hopkins send the drafts from last year.
  - Q. Andi Goldman asked when the citizens get to see the work.
  - R. Terry Carter said this board will hold a public, open meeting before the work is sent to the Select Board and Trustees.
  - S. Rose Goings said everyone is welcome to give input.
  - T. Eric Alden asked if there were ways to put deed restrictions on projects that add units that the added units remain affordable.
  - U. Jason Rasmussen said to send in suggestions.. He added that they also want to look at making it easier for businesses to do business.
2. New Hotel
- A. Terry Carter said that the neighbors are opposed to the hotel project on Andover Road. She said that she tells people to come to meetings.
  - B. Alan Couch said we need to let people know what we are doing. He said that the Planning Commission meetings will continue to be Zoom and eventually hybrid. The town should consider an investment in the needed equipment.
3. Planning Commission Terms
- A. Alan Couch said that his term and Phoebe Tucker's terms are up this year. He said that in the past, this board has 7 members and he would like to see it go back that way. We need to look for new members.
4. Traffic and Business Impacts on Town

- A. Eric Alden asked what the Planning Commission can do to set ground rules for business models for new businesses and the mountain. He said that the town has no idea of how many people will be coming into the town and it is taxing the town's municipal services. The mountain should have its own ambulance and police departments. What can be done to protect the town. The mountain sold too many passes. The town needs to lay the guidelines.
- B. Terry Carter said that Andover Road was backed up for miles with the traffic.
- C. Eric Alden said the town is getting the short end of the stick.
- D. Andi Goldman agreed that the mountain should have its own police and ambulance. She asked if there are impact fees that they should pay to support or pay for services.
- E. Ryan Silvestri asked if we can amend their operating or change them to make the mountain responsible for improvements.
- F. Rose Goings said there are a lot of permits with lots of conditions. We have been talking to the mountain and they are understaffed. They do have the buses, but can't get drivers. She said that providing bus service is in their permits. We are trying to work things out with them for the future.
- G. Ryan Silvestri asked about providing assistance with traffic.\
- H. Rose Goings said that is also in their permits, but in 2017, some of the sheriff services were removed, because they weren't needed. Now we need them and the sheriff's department is also understaffed.
- I. Andi Goldman asked, if they don't comply with their permits, are there penalties fees to compensate the town.
- J. Rose Goings said the town can issue violations, but this traffic was unknown. She said that the people at the mountain are trying to do what they can , such as signs directing traffic to go through Jackson Gore. The town shut Witalec Road, but people do what they want to do.
- K. Andi Goldman said that Vail is setting the tone here.
- L. Rose Goings said that Act 250 has its own permits.
- M. Andi Goldman said permits can be changed if the conditions change. She offered her legal advice.
- N. Eric Alden said that going forward, we can expect that this is the way that Vail will operate. We need to get this right for next year.
- O. Rose Goings said that is what we are trying to do. She said that the most important things are public safety, health and welfare. We need to make sure that we have safe housing and that emergency services can get around and through.
- P. Alan Couch said we need to get ahead of the game for next year.
- Q. Rose Goings said we need to be proactive about long term housing.
- R. Terry Carter said that if we go to the Select Board and Trustees, we already have the information about short term rentals.
- S. Ryan Silvestri said he has the information. He said that the registry is only the very beginning, we can't just have a list. It will evolve in the future.

5. Next Meeting

- A. Next meeting will be via ZOOM on March 15, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

VIII. **ADJOURN**

1. **MOTION by Terry Carter and seconded by Ryan Silvestri to adjourn this meeting.  
Motion passed unanimously.**
2. Meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

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Alan Couch, Chairman

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Ted Stryhas

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Terry Carter

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Phoebe Tucker

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Ryan Silvestri