

PLANNING COMMISSION

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

August 14, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alan Couch, Chairman
Terry Carter

Alan Isaacson

Logan Nicoll

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Norm Vanasse

STAFF PRESENT:

Barbara Davis

OTHERS PRESENT:

Aaron Galley
Jason Rasmussen

Torin Tofferi

Ed Mc Eneaney-Okemo Valley TV
Lisha Klaiber, Recorder

1. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Alan Couch called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL BY RECORDING SECRETARY

- A. All Planning Commission members present, except Norm Vanasse.

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

- A. No changes were needed.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- A. The minutes to be approved are from the meeting of July 17, 2018.
B. **MOTION by Alan Isaacson and seconded by Terry Carter to approve the minutes July 17, 2018 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

5. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

- A. There were none.

6. MPG19 DISCUSSION

- A. Alan Isaacson said that Jason Rasmussen had given them information regarding possible upcoming grants. He said that he likes what Chester did by hiring a professional planner to redo their town plan. Chester does have an active citizenry who participate in the town plan. Ludlow needs to have more citizen participation. He said that Ludlow also needs to have a professional go through the zoning regulations to check for inconsistencies like the drive-in/drive-through/drive-up windows situation.
- B. Jason Rasmussen said that the deadline for grant applications is October 1, 2018 and they should find out in December if they have been awarded a grant. The grant would be for 18 months and fit in Ludlow's schedule to have the town plan rewritten. He said that he has had a few discussions with Rose Goings and with Scott Murphy regarding grant priorities. They include affordable housing, infrastructure, the Village Center and a Village Master/Economic plan. He said that Scott Murphy is less enthusiastic about the Village Master/Economic plan and suggested that we look at active transportation, looking at parking in the village, signage, and streetscape improvements.
- C. Alan Isaacson said that with the high school closing, that building would be a great place for affordable housing and he suggested getting Elizabeth Bridgewater from the Windham-Windsor Housing Trust involved. It is a great location, within walking distance to the village. He knows that the structure has some issues, but that would be taken care of if the building was renovated.
- D. Logan Nicoll said the school district owns the building and the independent school group wants to use it.
- E. Terry Carter said that with the elementary school in the back, there may be a problem with traffic.
- F. Alan Isaacson said that could also be an incentive for people with small children, with the school being so close to housing. He said that the closing of the high school is a result of the problem that there are less young families with children because of lack of affordable housing.
- G. Terry Carter agreed and added lack of job opportunities.
- H. Logan Nicoll said that he told Scott Murphy about the study done about 10 years ago that suggested head in parking in the village. That would fit into the transportation issue.
- I. Alan Isaacson said completion of the town plan is a year out, and then we need to update the zoning. He would like to have a professional go through the zoning.
- J. Jason Rasmussen said that Chester received the Better Connections grant. He does not know if that funds programs for housing. What is the board's priority?
- K. Logan Nicoll said that transportation, including parking and crosswalks, has been a recurring subject at meetings.
- L. Terry Carter said that the people drive too fast through the town. She said that sidewalks are also a problem. She said there are fewer crosswalks.
- M. Logan Nicoll said that is because the town hasn't striped and painted them yet.
- N. Alan Isaacson said the board has until April/May 2019 to work on the town plan.
- O. Jason Rasmussen said he will draft up something for the grant that's due on October 1st.
- P. Alan Isaacson said that it would have to go to the Select Board and their meeting is on September 3rd. He asked Jason Rasmussen to send the draft to board members and some of us will get together with him before the Select Board meeting.

7. **DRIVE-UPS/DRIVE-THROUGHS/DRIVE-INS**

- A. Alan Isaacson said that he had gone through the zoning and emailed it to the board members. Any place that referenced Restaurant/Bar, he added: No Drive-ins, Drive-throughs, or Drive-ups. He said that he took out section 520.14 (the one John Neal objected to.) He said that any references to: "but not limited to," were removed. He asked board members to look the draft over and let him know if anything else is needed. He said that he and Jason Rasmussen discussed Personal Services and they added "pharmacy" and removed "businesses providing similar services of a personal nature. He said he removed restaurant/café from Retail Use/Service.

- B. Alan Couch asked if café is defined.
- C. Terry Carter asked if shop is defined.
- D. Jason Rasmussen said that, going forward, they need to revise uses, definitions and the districts.
- E. Terry Carter asked about definitions for car dealership or food service.
- F. Alan Isaacson said that food service is not defined, nor is convenience store. Delicatessen is defined. Dunkin' Donuts was permitted either as a gas station or restaurant, or it may have been grandfathered.
- G. Jason Rasmussen asked what this board's intent is.
- H. Alan Isaacson said it would take more than 6 months to go through the regulations.
- I. Logan Nicoll said that now, the board needs to focus on Drive-ins, Drive-throughs, or Drive-ups for the Select Board because there is no way we can do all that we want to do quickly.
- J. Alan Isaacson said they would need to start with a list of all permitted and conditional uses and make sure they all have definitions.
- K. Jason Rasmussen said that his office would be able to spend a couple of hours to do a basic audit and report back with some comments and suggestions.
- L. Alan Isaacson said he would send Jason Rasmussen the draft.
- M. Jason Rasmussen said someone would get back to them.
- N. Alan Isaacson said that he would send the draft out to the board members in the morning and asked them to review and get back to him with comments.

8. TOWN PLAN UPDATES

- A. Jason Rasmussen gave members a copy of the latest draft. He said that the Community Section is very preliminary. He said that he lumped together some parts to simplify and streamline it. He asked the board to look at it for format and content.
- B. There was general consensus from the board that the format was good.
- C. Jason Rasmussen said that in the Community Section, he omitted some parts, so the numbering is off. He will take care of that,
- D. Alan Isaacson suggested that History may be moved to Role in the Region. He asked if Jason Rasmussen had included any of the discussions from the pizza parties.
- E. Jason Rasmussen said he built them into various sections. He said that the Economy Section had a lot of data and that would be moved to the appendices.
- F. Alan Isaacson said he would like both a clean copy and a copy with all of the changes. He said that the Select board members also like to see the changes.
- G. Jason Rasmussen asked if we are saying the right things and is the approach right.
- H. Alan Isaacson said yes. He said he would also like to see the appendices.
- I. Jason Rasmussen said he will include them for the next meeting.
- J. Alan Isaacson said he would also like to see Land Use maps and wind and solar energy information.
- K. Jason Rasmussen asked if they wanted to put the Energy section in Community.
- L. Terry Carter asked about Affordable Housing.
- M. Jason Rasmussen said it would be in Community, but it is not done yet. He said that he needs to work on the data for housing and update the chapter.
- N. Alan Isaacson said that the state requires certain sections to be included in the town plan, is housing one.
- O. Jason Rasmussen said yes. He said it could be in Plans for the Future and Land Use.
- P. Alan Isaacson said that current and future housing is part of Plans for the Future.
- Q. Jason Rasmussen agreed. He said that he hasn't looked at Goals, Policies and Recommendations, yet.

- R. Alan Isaacson said that there had been a lot of redundancy in the different sections and that has to be consolidated.
- S. Jason Rasmussen asked about Economic and Transportation goals.
- T. Alan Isaacson said to lump all of the goals together. After that we need to address how to make them happen.
- U. Jason Rasmussen said there will be significant changes to Goals and Policies.
- V. Alan Isaacson said there are some things that can be removed from the current document.
- W. Jason Rasmussen said the Energy Section will be difficult to split up, as the state wants to see certain things in the plan.
- X. Alan Isaacson said that he had read something about the Regional Energy Plan.
- Y. Jason Rasmussen said that the Regional Board has adopted the Regional Energy Plan. It will be reviewed by the Department of Public Service at their meeting on September 4th. Hopefully, they will accept it.
- Z. Alan Isaacson asked does affect ours.
- AA. Jason Rasmussen said after the Regional Plan is accepted, then we can look at Ludlow's energy plan.
- BB. Alan Isaacson asked if Ludlow's will be accepted.
- CC. Jason Rasmussen said that Regional helped Ludlow write theirs. He said this is a new process for all of us.
- DD. Alan Isaacson asked how we deal with Seasonal Housing. We should put it in our plan. Ludlow is not the only town facing this problem.
- EE. Jason Rasmussen said he really doesn't know.
- FF. Aaron Galley asked if the town has the ability to adjust taxes for landlords who have affordable housing.
- GG. Alan Isaacson said that at one time, it was part of the tax code.
- HH. Logan Nicoll said there are tax incentives for day care.
- II. Jason Rasmussen said businesses within the Village Center Designation are eligible for tax credit programs for building renovations.
- JJ. Alan Isaacson said tax credits would be something the Select Board and Trustees would handle. It would be a separate discussion for Town Meeting.
- KK. Aaron Galley said that some landlords are going through Air B and B to rent their properties and get high rents.
- LL. Alan Isaacson said that could be put into the Housing Section – to encourage seasonal rentals.
- MM. Jason Rasmussen said they could look into tax credits.
- NN. Logan Nicoll said the Select Board is more interested in getting information about Affordable Housing.
- OO. Alan Isaacson said that the closing of the high school is making people more aware.
- PP. Torin Tofferi said you can use School Choice as an attraction to get people to move here. Their children would be able to go to Killington, Stratton or Burr and Burton.
- QQ. Logan Nicoll said that could be put into the language in the town plan when it becomes a reality.
- RR. Jason Rasmussen agreed that school choice could be an attraction.
- SS. Aaron Galley said that he is concerned about lack of broadband to all properties in Ludlow.
- TT. Terry Carter said that Cavendish is waiting to get response from Comcast.
- UU. Jason Rasmussen said that Regional will be scheduling a meeting to get the town managers and Select Boards of the towns together to determine what the options are to get better internet. They hope to schedule this meeting in the near future. He will keep them advised.
- VV. Alan Isaacson asked how VTEL was able to put in fiber optics.
- WW. Jason Rasmussen said they received a big grant.
- XX. Terry Carter said that 75% of the state can't apply for funds because of the money still owed by VTEL. Comcast is working on the state.
- YY. Alan Couch said that the bottom line is that we need better communications.

- ZZ. Jason Rasmussen said the towns are trying to set up a meeting with Clay Purvis from the Department of Public Service.
- AAA. Jason Rasmussen asked if the board felt that he should touch base with the department heads for the section on utilities.
- BBB. Alan Isaacson suggested running that by Scott Murphy first.
- CCC. Alan Couch noted that the section number for both Transportation and Utilities is 5.3.
- DDD. Jason Rasmussen said he would correct that.
- EEE. Logan Nicoll said he read some of the Transportation section and it looks fine.
- FFF. Alan Couch also said it looks good.
- GGG. Jason Rasmussen said he would talk to Scott Murphy about utilities.
- HHH. Logan Nicoll asked if they would address Energy after Education.
- III. Jason Rasmussen said he is still working on that.
- JJJ. Alan Isaacson asked why Energy is not part of Utilities.
- KKK. Jason Rasmussen said they could lump roads, utilities, and schools together.
- LLL. Alan Isaacson asked why not Energy.
- MMM. Jason Rasmussen said that is a really big chapter by itself.
- NNN. Alan Isaacson said they are related and he thinks they should be together.
- OOO. Jason Rasmussen said he would look at it.
- PPP. Alan Isaacson said he wonders if the changes in the schools will change the Municipal Transit system.
- QQQ. Logan Nicoll said it may go back to the school district and be included with Chester.
- RRR. Alan Isaacson said it was started when Act 60 was passed to reduce the per student cost.

9. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. Next meeting will be on September 18, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

10. **ADJOURN**

- A. **MOTION by Alan Isaacson and seconded by Logan Nicoll to adjourn this meeting. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Alan Couch, Chairman

Logan Nicoll

Terry Carter

Norman Vanasse

Alan Isaacson