

PLANNING COMMISSION
PRELIMINARY MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

August 15, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alan Couch	Alan Isaacson	Norm Vanasse
Terry Carter	Logan Nicoll	

STAFF PRESENT:

Rose Goings

OTHERS PRESENT:

Aaron Galley	Ed McEneaney, LPC-TV	Lisha Klaiber, Recorder
Jason Rasmussen		

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Alan Couch called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL BY SECRETARY

A. All members present

3. APPROVE MINUTES

A. Alan Couch advised that the minutes to be reviews are from July 18, 2017.

B. **MOTION by Alan Isaacson and seconded by Terry Carter to approve the minutes from July 18, 2017. Motion passed unanimously**

4. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

A. There were none.

5. ENERGY CHAPTER

A. Jason Rasmussen noted that he had made some changes based on comments from Frank Heald and had flagged them. They referred to 2 items being removed from potential locations: brownfields and canopies over paved parking lots.

B. Terry Carter asked why they were removed.

- C. Logan Nicoll said he believed Frank Heald thinks that canopies are impractical in Vermont with all of the snow and there are no brownfields in Ludlow.
- D. Aaron Galley said the canopies are useful if designed properly.
- E. Terry Carter said she does not want them removed.
- F. Jason Rasmussen said that according to ANR, there are only 2 active brownfields in Ludlow; the site of the Armory and the Jewel Brook Mill property. He said that panels are more likely to be on roofs. The state includes canopies and brownfields in their preferred sites.
- G. Rose Goings said the Jewel Brook Mill site has been cleaned up.
- H. Alan Isaacson asked if either of the two locations is close enough to major transmission lines to make them viable.
- I. Logan Nicoll said that the Select Board didn't make any comments about the town plan. A copy was in their packets. Howard Barton said he has comments, but did not make them. Logan Nicoll said he told the Select Board about the tight schedule to re-adopt the town plan.
- J. Alan Isaacson said that the Village Plan does not expire until March 2018. He asked what would happen if we skip one or two months before re-adopting the town plan.
- K. Logan Nicoll said he is in favor of putting them back in, he prefers to stick to the state model.
- L. Alan Isaacson asked about "other sites" in the list.
- M. Jason Rasmussen said he put it in in case they wanted to add other places.
- N. Alan Isaacson said it is too vague and might allow anything to come in.
- O. Jason Rasmussen said he would delete that line.
- P. Logan Nicoll said they should also include references to maps for other preferred locations.
- Q. Jason Rasmussen agreed that they do need the maps.
- R. Logan Nicoll said they should also narrow down their preferred locations.
- S. Jason Rasmussen said that brownfields are easy to do, but canopies are more difficult. He is not sure about gravel pits or the Industrial Park. He said the maps they have show potential sites where the model suggests good sun.
- T. Alan Isaacson said we had discussed removing sites where we don't want installations.
- U. Jason Rasmussen said we can put a one mile buffer around the 3-phase lines and say those locations are more feasible or preferred.
- V. Alan Isaacson said after this is approved, we will do the comprehensive update and can revise this part at that time.
- W. Alan Couch said that is a good idea.
- X. Jason Rasmussen said you could do a less involved Energy Chapter now and revise it after the town plan is re-adopted.
- Y. Alan Isaacson said he thought the new state laws require the updated Energy Chapter.
- Z. Jason Rasmussen said he would check the law.
- AA. Logan Nicoll said they have to do this in order to get Substantial Deference.
- BB. Alan Isaacson said this document is almost ready for distribution.
- CC. Logan Nicoll said there is not enough feedback from the Select Board and they do have some comments.
- DD. Alan Isaacson suggested going to the Select Board meeting and asking them for a public hearing, get comments at that meeting and make changes between that meeting and the public hearing. He said we have done this before, asked the Select Board to approve the document subject to making the changes that they requested.
- EE. Rose Goings said that is as long as there are no substantial changes.
- FF. Terry Carter noted that the draft says there no wind turbines in Ludlow.
- GG. Rose Goings said there are 2, North Hill and Holby Road.

- HH. Jason Rasmussen said he will change that.
- II. Terry Carter said she has a problem with why no ground mounted solar units in the Village. She said if they are not visible from the street, why not.
- JJ. Alan Isaacson said someone will see it. Why not just roof mounted.
- KK. Terry Carter said maybe there is more sun in the yard.
- LL. Alan Couch said some of the lots in the village are small and may not meet setbacks.
- MM. Logan Nicoll said the Select Board and Trustees may have a problem with that.
- NN. Alan Couch said they could restrict them from the Village Center and Preservation District and allow them in other parts of the Village.
- OO. Alan Isaacson said people do not need permits for them. It's not in the Zoning Regulations.
- PP. Terry Carter asked when this board said no utility scale wind turbines anywhere in Ludlow.
- QQ. Rose Goings said she thinks it should be referring to the Village.
- RR. Alan Isaacson said they did not want them on the ridgelines.
- SS. Jason Rasmussen explained that residential turbines are no more than 30 meters high, commercial turbines no more than 50 meters high and utility are 70+ meters high. He thought they didn't want any in the Village.
- TT. Logan Nicoll said he doesn't want them in the Village and would like to designate appropriate areas.
- UU. Alan Couch said we wanted to protect the ridgelines.
- VV. Logan Nicoll said there are some areas that would work outside of the ridgelines.
- WW. Rose Goings said maybe Howard Barton can comment on this.
- XX. Terry Carter said she would prefer only installations that benefit Ludlow Electric.
- YY. Aaron Galley said some Ludlow residents are on Green Mountain Power.
- ZZ. Terry Carter said it doesn't seem like a good idea to close the door on all wind turbines.
- AAA. Jason Rasmussen said you can try to write policy, but don't know what the PSB will allow for Substantial Deference. They will make their decisions by July 2018. One town has already been denied because it did not meet all of the requirements. You can ask the PSB for pre-review.
- BBB. Alan Isaacson said we should leave it as it is now and have people come in to ask us to change the regulations.
- CCC. Terry Carter said she would like to add that it benefits Ludlow rate payers.
- DDD. Norman Vanasse said he is pro-wind turbines. He said you have to give something up and the government will eventually tell you what you have to do. He said if we approve the town plan draft that we have now, it can be changed later.
- EEE. Aaron Galley said other towns have gone through the process. He added that one wind turbine produces a lot of power.
- FFF. Logan Nicoll said we have to write language to get Substantial Deference. If we don't, the Select Board may not approve it. If we say no larger scale wind turbines, the PSB may probably deny us Substantial Deference. We'll have to include wind turbines, but clearly designate where we want them.
- GGG. Jason Rasmussen asked 50 meters or 70 meters.
- HHH. Logan Nicoll said 50, not 70.
- III. Rose Goings said the best we can do tonight is guess where are the best areas in Ludlow for wind turbines.
- JJJ. Jason Rasmussen asked how quickly the board wants to move on this. You can always change it later. He said that Regional wrote it in. They sent their draft to the PSB for pre-review. He suggested that Ludlow also send this draft to the PSB for pre-review. They will make comments and send them to you.
- KKK. Terry Carter said it has to say that it directly benefits Ludlow rate payers.

- LLL. Logan Nicoll said we will accept larger renewable energy projects if they benefit Ludlow rate payers.
- MMM. Alan Isaacson said that Ranger Solar does not benefit Ludlow rate payers, but it does benefit Ludlow taxpayers. He added that renters don't get the benefits.
- NNN. Terry Carter said they should put the preferred sites on the map.
- OOO. Jason Rasmussen said that they could also list unsuitable sites like ridgelines for wind turbines.
- PPP. Terry Carter said they are not suitable in the village. She still wants it to reflect benefit to Ludlow rate payers.
- QQQ. Jason Rasmussen asked if they want it to say that they will allow commercial solar sites above 500 KW to directly benefit Ludlow rate payers only and commercial and utility scale wind turbines.
- RRR. Terry Carter asked about hydroelectric power. She said that Springfield has 5 currently active dams and 2 others. Why isn't it considered feasible.
- SSS. Jason Rasmussen said that the permit process is very difficult, expensive and takes a long time. If you have existing dams, it can be explored.
- TTT. Logan Nicoll said Ludlow has 4 dams with some hydro potential. He understands that it is expensive to develop and he knows that it can take as long as 10 to 20 years for the permit process.
- UUU. Jason Rasmussen said the ones on the Connecticut River are taking years to get through the permit process. He said he will make the changes discussed tonight for the next meeting. He said if they want to start the pre-review process with the PSB, he can start the process for them.
- VVV. Logan Nicoll said it makes sense to start it.
- WWW. Jason Rasmussen said it could take a couple of months.
- XXX. There was consensus among board members to start the process.

6. UPCOMING SCHEDULE

- A. The board reviewed the schedule distributed by Jason Rasmussen.
- B. Jason Rasmussen said the intent is to show that the town plan expires on November 5, 2017 and he worked backward from that date.
- C. Alan Isaacson asked what would be the downside if we let the town plan expire. The village plan does not expire until March.
- D. Jason Rasmussen said it would affect ACT250 hearings and you would not be able to amend zoning regulations. He said that ACT250 would only look at the Regional Plan.
- E. Alan Isaacson said we could use the Energy Chapter as discussed and asked what else needs to be done for a draft Town Plan that can be discussed at the September meeting.
- F. Jason Rasmussen said he can have the draft ready.
- G. Rose Goings said the meeting would be on September 19th.
- H. Alan Isaacson said he does not think they will make it by November 5th.
- I. Jason Rasmussen said he will have a draft to the board by September 12th, with changes marked, to be discussed at the meeting on the 19th. They could schedule their public hearing for October 17th.
- J. Rose Goings said it the public hearing would have to be on October 24th, because notice for town plan public hearings is 30 days.
- K. Alan Isaacson said they would then go to the Select Board's meeting on November 6th and they could warn their public hearing for December.

- L. Jason Rasmussen said then the town plan would be expired for one month.
- M. Alan Isaacson asked about pending ACT250 hearings.
- N. Rose Goings said there is one, but it is in the Village and the village plan does not expire until March 2018.
- O. Alan Isaacson said the Select Board may approve the plan subject to comments. They can also go to the Trustees meeting in November.
- P. Rose Goings said there are still issues with the wording in the Land Use section, with which a trustee disagrees.
- Q. Logan Nicoll said there is now a new, third trustee.
- R. Alan Isaacson said there is also a new Vision Statement.
- S. Jason Rasmussen said they could invite the Select Board and Trustees to their next meeting for comments.
- T. The board discussed and changed the language to which the trustee objected.
- U. Jason Rasmussen said they still need to review the new Village Center boundary, Smart Growth Principles, Water quality language, Implementation sections and Forest lands (after December, this needs to be included.)
- V. Alan Isaacson asked if these could be discussed at the next go-around.
- W. Jason Rasmussen said the board could deal with them next time. He said the maps are done and the data has been updated.
- X. Alan Isaacson noted that the changes to the Vision Statement had not been included. He said he would send it to Jason Rasmussen.
- Y. Jason Rasmussen said he would have the new draft to board members a week before their next meeting.

7. MPG GRANT

- A. Rose Goings advised that they are writing a grant application for comprehensive update of the town plan. It comes up in October. They are applying for \$12,540 and the town will contribute \$1,500. It will be in the FY2019 budget. We will work with Jason Rasmussen. The application includes the new plan, vision, maps, adoption process and all requirements to prepare the document for the process.
- B. Alan Isaacson asked if there would be a time frame in which they would have to use the grant funds.
- C. Jason Rasmussen said, if funded, it would be from January 2018 to May 2019.
- D. Alan Isaacson asked would this be for re-adoption for 8 years or an amendment.
- E. Jason Rasmussen said he strongly suggests re-adoption.
- F. Alan Isaacson said are we going for the 8 years in December.
- G. Jason Rasmussen said there are changes in the state laws and you can make minor changes during the 8 year period. Jason Rasmussen noted that the scope of work for the grant application includes the maps and vision statement. These are mostly done.
- H. Alan Isaacson said the leave it in and use the funds as needed.
- I. Rose Goings noted that they did not get funded last year and there is always a chance they won't get funded again.
- J. Jason Rasmussen said they will need a resolution for the Select Board and Alan Couch to sign.
- K. Rose Goings said they will still have a town plan in September when they apply for this grant.

- L. Jason Rasmussen asked if they feel comfortable asking the Select Board to sign off on the grant application before it is fully written.
- M. Alan Isaacson said he thinks they would be okay with the wording.
- N. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Terry Carter to authorize the Chair, Alan Couch to sign the grant application pending Select Board approval. Motion passed unanimously.**

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. There was none.

9. **ADJOURN**

- A. **MOTION to adjourn by Alan Isaacson and seconded by Logan Nicoll. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting closed at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Alan Couch, Chairman

Logan Nicoll

Terry Carter

Norman Vanasse

Alan Isaacson