

PLANNING COMMISSION

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

October 15, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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| Alan Couch, Chairman | Alan Isaacson |
| Terry Carter (by phone) | George Tucker, Jr. |

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Aaron Galley

STAFF PRESENT:

Barbara Davis

OTHERS PRESENT:

Lisha Klaiber, Recorder Patrick Cody -Okemo Valley TV

1. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Alan Couch called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL BY RECORDING SECRETARY

- A. All Planning Commission members present, except Aaron Galley. Terry Carter called in by phone.

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

- A. There were no changes.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- A. The minutes to be approved are from the meeting of September 17, 2019.
B. **MOTION by Alan Isaacson and seconded by George Tucker, Jr. to approve the minutes September 17, 2019 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

5. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

- A. There were none.

6. REVIEW TOWN & VILLAGE ZONING FOR CHANGES BASED ON NEW MUNICIPAL PLAN

- A. Alan Couch advised that the municipal plan was approved by the Select Board and Village Trustees last week.
- B. Alan Isaacson said that about 10 months ago, Phil Carter asked the board to look at sections 530.1 and 530.3 of the Village Zoning Regulations regarding parking requirements in the village. He said that if Mama's had been a change of use, they would not have received their permit because they do not have sufficient parking. The two sections are confusing and contradictory. The zoning regulations require businesses to have certain numbers of parking spaces. In some places of the RC district in the village, there are no spaces to be had. He said that if we remove those 2 sections, existing businesses that have parking, may even enlarge their buildings and decrease the number of parking spaces they have. He said that he is not sure that the new municipal plan has any changes that would require changes to the zoning regulations. He added that Rose Goings sent out an email about a meeting in Montpelier on November 4, 2019, that is about review of zoning regulations for 5 towns. This would include affordable housing. He said that the agenda for tonight's meeting was posted before they know about the meeting in Montpelier.
- C. George Tucker, Jr., referring to Mama's, said that no other business could go in that space.
- D. Alan Isaacson said they could rent parking spaces from other places, if they have a contract.
- E. George Tucker, Jr. said that the businesses in the village are within walking distance of the municipal lot, but that cannot be their primary source of parking.
- F. Alan Couch said there are enough daytime businesses, and if there is a business friendly atmosphere, they could work together. He said that when Aubuchons expanded, the corporate people wanted them to chain off their parking at night, but Tom Bissonnette, their former manager, would not do it. Alan Couch said he doesn't think we should remove section 530, but rework it. After the meeting next month in Montpelier, they may have heard some suggestions.
- G. Terry Carter said the zoning regulations should mention the municipal lot.
- H. Alan Isaacson said the town has a grant for signage and he thinks there will be a sign for the lot.
- I. Terry Carter said they should include something in the zoning that says that existing parking must remain.
- J. Alan Couch said it would have to be worded properly – our intent must be clear and we have to make sure there are no loopholes.
- K. Terry Carter said since they expanded, there is less parking now at Aubuchons. We have to say that parking may not be decreased.
- L. Alan Couch said we have to carefully hash it out. We may get some ideas at the Montpelier meeting next month. There will be 5 other towns and consultants.
- M. Alan Isaacson asked if anyone else thinks there are any other changes needed in the zoning regulations.
- N. Alan Couch said he doesn't think so.
- O. Terry Carter said she thinks the board should sit down with the zoning regulations and marked up copy of the municipal plan and compare them.
- P. Alan Couch said this board went through the zoning regulations and made changes based on the town plan. We could go back through them, but he thinks the zoning has been taken care of.
- Q. George Tucker, Jr. said the board didn't make any drastic changes to the town plan. He agreed that they may get some ideas at the meeting in Montpelier.
- R. Alan Couch said they did make changes to the definitions and tweaked some of the permitted and conditional uses. He added that the board was pretty thorough.
- S. George Tucker, Jr. said there was also a discussion about large solar projects.
- T. Alan Isaacson said they didn't want any more large projects like the one on Barker Road, but we cannot legislate that is it is determined by the PSB. He said that our Energy Section was

approved by the Regional Planning Commission and therefore, by the state. (He added that since we readopted the town plan, we may have to reapply with the state. He will check.) With the Energy Section being approved by the Regional Planning Commission, the Select Board may apply to the PSB at hearings.

- U. Terry Carter said to put that in the zoning regulations.
- V. Alan Couch explained that it is out of our hands and up to the PSB. We can't legally put it in the zoning regulations. The town does have "Due Deference at the PSB hearings.
- W. Alan Isaacson agreed, saying we can't zone against large solar projects.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. Board Member "Homework for next meeting."
 - i. Alan Isaacson said that Board members should review the zoning regulations and compare them with the marked up copy of the town plan. He will email marked up copy to board members.
- B. Parking
 - i. Alan Couch said that board members should consider ways to deal with parking
 - ii. Alan Isaacson said they should take down the "No Parking" signs on the west side of Pond Street.
 - iii. Terry Carter said that Stemwinders has hardly any parking. She added that on Christmas Eve, people even park in the middle of the street.

8. **ADJOURN**

- A. **MOTION by Alan Isaacson and seconded by George Tucker, Jr. to adjourn this meeting. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisha Klaiber

Alan Couch, Chairman

Alan Isaacson

Terry Carter

George Tucker, Jr.

Aaron Galley