

**CITY OF VERGENNES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2013**

Members Present: Shannon Haggett-Chair, Tim Cook, Morgan Kittredge, Alexandria McGuire, Stacy Raphael, Mike Winslow

Members Absent: Rebecca Duffy, Jason Farrell

Also Present: Mel Hawley, Zoning Administrator

Shannon Haggett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The minutes to the regular meeting of March 18, 2013 were reviewed. Mike Winslow suggested corrections to the minutes. Shannon requested a motion to approve the amended minutes. Mike moved to approve the amended minutes. The motion was seconded by Tim Cook with all voting in favor.

The group began the review of requested amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations. At the March meeting, Bill Houston presented a request for an amendment to allow Motor Vehicle Service Station by Conditional Use in the Industrial District. During that meeting there was no opposition the idea of amending Section 1611.B.6. Shannon and Mel asked that the group revisit the amendment to be certain that it matched the intent of the Municipal Development Plan.

After lengthy discussion, it was suggested that instead of amending Section 1611.B.6, that we recommend amending Section 1507.7, add a definition for "Convenience Store" and determine districts where they might be allowed. Shannon and Mel will draft new wording for discussion in May's meeting.

Shannon suggested that instead of recommending a single amendment to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, the Planning Commission review all potential amendments requested to date since adoption of the Regulations. All amendments could then be recommended at the same time. A log has been kept of these proposed amendments and they were reviewed at this time.

On January 17, 2013 Mel and Shannon discussed the in-line rooftop solar panel maximum size exemption. After review with the Planning Commission it was decided that no amendment was necessary.

On December 5, 2012 Mel suggested that Section 1506.4 be reviewed for clarity. During the April meeting it was recommended that the section be amended to read:

“In any residential district, one camper trailer or motor home that is parked on a lot containing a one-family dwelling may be used as living quarters under the following conditions:

- a. The camper trailer or motor home shall not be used as living quarters for longer than an aggregate of one month over a calendar year.
- b. No more than one camper trailer or motor home shall be occupied on any such lot.

On November 2, 2012 Mel found what he thought was a typographical error in Section 1610 with both “Restaurant Retail Store” and “Retail Store” listed as conditional uses in the Otter Creek Basin District. The Planning Commission agreed that no amendment was needed but the two uses could be corrected to read “Restaurant” and “Retail Store”.

On October 30, 2012 Mel found that “Professional Service” was not listed as a conditional use in the Commercial District but that it should be listed. The Planning Commission agreed that we recommend an amendment to add “Professional Service” to the list of conditional uses in the district.

On October 27, 2012 Mel found that in Section 312 there is an exemption for “Play Structure” but no exemption or definition of “Playhouse” or “Tree House”. The Planning Commission agreed that there should be a distinction and that while a “Play Structure” could be exempt, that a “Playhouse” or “Tree House” may not be exempt dependent on the height and footprint. Shannon volunteered to find example definitions from other regulations as well as draft definitions for review in May’s meeting.

Committee Updates:

Transportation: Mel informed everyone that the VTrans Transportation Alternatives grant for extending sidewalks did not receive approval. He also said that a Downtown Improvement grant had been approved to upgrade curbing and sidewalks in the CBD. He was also seeking some funds for an engineering project to provide pedestrian buttons for the intersection of Main Street and Green Street.

Mel also suggested that for May’s meeting everyone take a look at and prioritize the list of recommendations contained in “Cultivating Community through Sustainable Transportation: Proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements in Vergennes, VT”

Education: Shannon reported that he and Rebecca Duffy had met with teachers and students on March 26<sup>th</sup> at VUHS. They presented basic information about the different aspects of Vergennes’ city government – who we are, what we do, and how it all flows together. The goal is to get student volunteers to attend city meetings (City Council, Planning Commission, DRB, Recreation Committee, Vergennes Partnership, etc.) Shannon will follow up with Rebecca Coffey to determine the next steps.

Stormwater: Mel wants to have Jim Larrow, Director of Public Works present for any substantive discussion on stormwater planning. Everyone agreed with this idea. Mel said he would ask Jim Pease of the Dept. of Environmental Conservation to also attend a future meeting

to provide some guidance in the planning process.

Tree/Urban Forestry: Mike said that he was developing a crowd-sourcing model through Google to update the tree inventory. Stacy Raphael asked about involving students in the update process and Mike responded that he wanted to make sure the model was thoroughly tested prior to opening it up to the public, but that yes, students would be a fantastic resource for the project.

Tim asked about creatively finding ways to fund new plantings – perhaps by having local businesses sponsor new street tree plantings. He also asked if there were any guidelines surrounding what specimens should be used and where they should be used. Mel said that there were general guidelines and that he would also want Jim Larrow’s involvement in this process.

Under new business, Mel had included an article titled “Planning for Renovations and Demolitions” in this month’s information packets. He said that while the EPA and the VT Department of Health have requirements, we have no guidance to citizens surrounding the safe removal of asbestos during renovations and demolitions. Alex McGuire suggested that this might be something to be considered when we update the Municipal Development Plan.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Mel Hawley, Clerk