

VERGENNES CITY COUNCIL – SPECIAL MEETING  
PUBLIC HEARING – MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2014  
MINUTES

Mayor William Benton called the special meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. at the Vergennes Fire Station meeting room located at 50 Green Street. He advised this meeting will begin with the duly warned and posted public hearing on the proposed municipal development plan. Those in attendance were:

Mayor William Benton	City Clerk Joan Devine
Deputy Mayor Randall Ouellette	Dan Pflaster
Alderman Michael Daniels	Greg Edwards (7:30 p.m.)
Alderman Lowell Bertrand	Cheryl Brinkman
Alderman Renny Perry	Sierra Bertrand
City Manager Mel Hawley	

PUBLIC HEARING: Mayor Benton opened the floor to any questions or comments regarding proposed changes to the municipal development plan. Dan Pflaster, owner of 10 Main Street that is located in the Northern Gateway District (NGD), stated that he appreciated those who understood his situation. Discussion at the last meeting resulted in a change allowing residential on the ground floor with entrance in the rear in the Central Business District, he advised, and recommended an amendment to the NGD which as currently proposed prohibits residential uses at the ground level. He would like to have added, “Except in an adaptive reuse as long as no more than 25% of the ground floor is residential and ingress/egress to residential unit is not located on the front of the building”. Also recommended to be included is “architectural elements are appropriate for residential use (no plate glass storefront type windows or commercial style doors).

Senior Alderman Randall Ouellette inquired if changes are made at this point, would it set the re-adoption process back. Manager Hawley advised it would and reported that we do not have a municipal development plan in place at this time as it expired yesterday. Senior Alderman Ouellette inquired if we did not act on this recommendation, would Mr. Pflaster be able to get a variance to do what he wants. Manager Hawley advised he could certainly apply but there are very strict criteria. Alderman Perry wondered what the Planning Commission would feel of this change. Planning Commission Chair Shannon Haggett reported that there are grant applications pending that can’t move forward without a plan in place. If you approve the proposed plan without additional changes it will expire in 2019 but there are other changes that are needed in the near future so this could be looked at again at that time. Manager Hawley reported Dan Pflaster just wants flexibility with his property. Prior to the creation of the NGD in 2009 that area was comprised of two zoning districts; Commercial and Industrial/Commercial. No residential uses were allowed in those districts but the change to NGD brought his into compliance.

Alderman Daniels felt that we are in the eleventh hour now and have grants pending that need to go forward. Dan Pflaster advised he appreciates the timeliness in getting the plan in place but this plan is not consistent with the zoning regulations. He advised he is not sure how we got to the eleventh hour without correcting this because he thought working on the plan would correct all this. The public hearing was closed at 6:22 p.m.

PUBLIC ASSEMBLAGE PERMIT: An application was submitted by Heather Simons to hold a block party on East Street on October 11 with a rain date of October 12 that would require closing the street from School Street down to the intersection of New Haven Road. Manager Hawley advised the application arrived last Friday and no one is here to address the application so he is not sure if the police, fire, and rescue have been notified. According to an e-mail from Heather Simon, all the neighbors except two have been notified, he advised. Lowell Bertrand moved to approve the permit once clarification has been received that notifications to the emergency agencies has been done. The motion was seconded by Senior Alderman Ouellette with all voting in favor.

MUNICIPAL PLAN ADOPTION: Mayor Benton advised he would like to fix any problems with the plan as soon as we can but felt we needed to move forward for the grants that are pending. Alderman Lowell Bertrand moved to adopt the proposed Municipal Development Plan as presented by the Planning Commission and amended by the City Council . Senior Alderman seconded the motion with all voting in favor.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE ENFORCEMENT VEHICLE: City Manager Mel Hawley updated the City Council regarding our bid on Hinesburg's 2009 Chevrolet Tahoe with 83,000 miles. The City bid \$7,500 for the vehicle and \$3,000 for the equipment but a company out of Chicago bid \$11,700 for just the vehicle. Sheriff Don Keeler of the Addison County Sheriff's Department (ACSD) has offered to donate the use of their 2004 Ford Explorer with 80,000 miles which would be titled to the City with a reversion clause that the vehicle goes back to them upon taking the vehicle out of service by the Vergennes Police Department. Any equipment that we install in the vehicle would not go back to them. Chief George Merkel provided a memorandum that showed the cost to paint and upgrade the vehicle's equipment estimated at \$10,424. Senior Alderman Randall Ouellette moved to authorize Manager Hawley to enter into this agreement with the ACSD, seconded by Alderman Perry, with all voting in favor.

ADJOURNMENT: At 6:37 p.m. Senior Alderman Randall Ouellette moved to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Alderman Mike Daniels, with all voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Vergennes City Clerk