

**CITY OF VERGENNES
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2015**

Members Present: Shannon Haggett-Chair, Mike Winslow-Vice Chair, Morgan Kittredge, Tim Cook, Rebecca Rey, Jason Farrell, Cheryl Brinkman

Members Absent: John Coburn

Also Present: Mel Hawley, Zoning Administrator, Barbara Bosworth, Tim Bosworth

Shannon Haggett called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Shannon introduced Barbara and Tim Bosworth. Barbara is a graduate student in Historic Preservation at UVM and attended the meeting to observe the process of the Planning Commission discussing regulations for the Historic Neighborhood District.

The minutes to the regular meeting and annual meeting of December 15, 2014 were reviewed. Mike moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Cheryl with all voting in favor except for Cheryl as she was not present at the December meeting.

The Planning Commission continued its discussion on proposed updates to the zoning and subdivision regulations. In December's meeting, Mike stated he would provide draft language for the Historic Neighborhood District Section 1604.F.11 through Section 1604.F.14. The group reviewed the draft and talked about including Section 1604.F.10 along with the rest of the sections to be listed as bullet-points, and to rearrange their order for clarity. The discussion centered on whether or not the regulations need to be more comprehensive to provide guidance to the Development Review Board. Morgan and Cheryl voiced concerns about how far we could and should go in cataloging specific items. Rebecca questioned if we needed to define "historical" and/or "historical significance". Jason and Tim felt that the Development Review Board would be able to make a determination of the appropriateness of an application as the current process affords input from the community. Thus we do not need to create exhaustive regulations that would be burdensome. Tim volunteered to draft language to clarify Mike's original wording and to capture the continued discussion.

Next there was a lengthy discussion on Section 1604.F.5 – mostly centered on whether or not the Zoning Administrator has the authority to issue zoning permits for single-story additions or if these would need to go before the Development Review Board. Much of that is dependent on whether the phrase "new buildings" – is interpreted as a verb or a noun. The consensus was that the Zoning Administrator continues to have the authority to issue zoning permits for one-family and two-family dwellings seeking single-story additions.

The discussion moved to Section 1604.F.9 which covers additions. The section includes four subsections that currently read as recommendations. Rebecca will rewrite the recommendations as regulations for further review next month.

In the Central Business District Shannon presented new language for Section 1609.F.2.e to cover allowed ground floor residential use. Included in the draft was a bullet point detailing a percentage-based allowance of the building's footprint for residential use as discussed in December's meeting. Jason was

concerned that any percentage-based standard is not supported by the municipal development plan. It was agreed that this is not supported by the plan and Shannon will bring new language for February's meeting.

The discussion then moved to the Northern Gateway District and Section 1613.E covering specific standards. Several members questioned if all types of development ought to be required to meet all fifteen specific standards. It was generally agreed that all development should meet standards 1 through 8, but that meeting all fifteen might be burdensome and counterproductive to the intent of the Plan and the District. Morgan volunteered to draft new language for the February meeting.

The Planning Commission then discussed the timeline for completion of updating the regulations. Shannon proposed that the group continue discussion and finalize Article XVI by March. Then Mel and Shannon would reconcile other sections and present the changes to the entire Planning Commission for review.

Transportation Committee Update – Shannon reported that the City Council authorized Mel in his capacity as City Manager to sign Project Commitments Form to formally accept the Strong Communities, Better Connections Program Grant of \$40,500. He also noted there was a conference call scheduled for Monday, January 26th and he would provide call-in details for anyone who wanted to attend.

Stormwater Committee Update – Mike reported that his employer, Lake Champlain Committee, was awarded a grant to scope and resolve stormwater issues in Crosby Farms. Farms Lake Champlain Committee will manage the project; the City is provided the ten percent local match. The next step is to contact Otter Creek Engineering to review work done thus far and determine next steps.

Tree/Urban Forestry – Mike and Mel reported that the UVM Urban Forestry Plan was completed and Elaine Brodsky from UVM had provided a link to download the plan. Both thought the time to download had elapsed and neither had a copy of the final plan. Mel stated he would contact Elaine to reactivate the download and share with anyone who wanted to see the document.

Materials Management – Cheryl asked that Materials Management be added as a new committee. Cheryl is the City's appointed member of the Addison County Solid Waste Management District Board of Supervisors and current is their chair. She provided a brief overview of how the Addison County Solid Waste Management District operates and informed the Planning Commission that Mel plans to attend an upcoming workshop on how changes in the state laws surrounding materials management would affect municipalities.

Under new business Mel asked to revisit the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure. In December, Mel had drafted amendments to the rules to conform to the State's new open meeting law. He realized there was one more change necessary to comply and provided updated language surrounding the posting of public notices for meetings. Cheryl also pointed out one typographical error which was corrected. Morgan moved to adopt the amended Rules of Procedure. The motion was seconded by Cheryl with all voting in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mel Hawley, Clerk