

**CITY OF VERGENNES
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2014**

Members Present: Shannon Haggett-Chair, Tim Cook, Rebecca Duffy, Jason Farrell,
Morgan Kittredge, Alexandria McGuire

Members Absent: Stacy Raphael, Mike Winslow

Also Present: Teri Kuczynski, ACSWMD; Mel Hawley, Zoning Administrator

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

Teri Kuczynski from the Addison County Solid Waste Management District (ACSWMD) updated the Planning Commission on the status of Act 148. Act 148 is the state's new Universal Recycling Law and Teri was invited to explain how implementation of the law will affect Vergennes and to use her expertise to help update the solid waste entry of the municipal plan. Teri provided documentation on the law and detailed the scheduled rollout of the implementation over the next six years. The highlights include that solid waste will be categorized into three main types: trash, recyclables and food scraps/compostable materials.

Teri discussed how the implementation is projected to be phased in with compliance from large generators and haulers first, followed by everyone by 2020. Teri acknowledged that many of the details still need to be resolved at the state level, with the goal to have all recyclables and compostable materials banned from landfills by 2020.

She stated that Vergennes, as well as the rest of Addison County is better-poised to comply with Act 148 than other parts of the state. The City already has a mobile facility to handle recyclables, but must determine whether to create a permanent facility or make arrangements for current haulers to handle compostable materials at the mobile facility. Vergennes also already uses containers for separated trash/recycling in public areas. Mel asked about obtaining stickers or signage to make them easier to identify. Teri stated that ACSWMD could help with that.

Teri suggested that for the municipal plan update, we should acknowledge Act 148 and its goals, as well as discussing the City's intent to comply with the law without getting into too many details, as the implementation schedule is not complete. Shannon volunteered to draft an entry for everyone to review in March.

The minutes to the regular meeting of January 27, 2014 were reviewed. Jason moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Alex with all voting in favor except for Rebecca who was not present at the January meeting.

Shannon and Jason updated the group on the status of the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) Community Visit program. The visit will be held on Tuesday, March 18, 2014. There will be a total of nine 90-minute public sessions, with three sessions running concurrently at three different locations. The sessions will be held at the Vergennes Opera House and at the Bixby Library. The session topics are:

- Municipal & Non-Profit Resources
- Tourism
- Recreation & Entertainment
- Role of Municipal Government
- Basin & Riverside Development
- Connecting Youth
- Transportation Infrastructure & Pedestrian Safety
- The Future of Economic Development
- Vergennes Community Center

The visit is a tremendous opportunity for Vergennes as a visiting team of over 30 state, federal, business, non-profit, and philanthropic leaders will attend to listen to our opportunities and challenges and then help to identify resources in the months ahead. The VCRD will then return to Vergennes two more times in the next three months, to share their expertise and resources for our priorities. Jason and Shannon showed everyone examples of the reports that the VCRD has produced for other municipalities. We discussed that the Community Visit would be extremely helpful to the municipal plan update process and that the final report could be included as an appendix. Jason excused himself from the meeting at 8:30 pm.

The group then continued a review of chapters three, four and five of the municipal plan. Below is a chart outlining the status of various sections in chapters three and four:

Section	Contact	PC Initiator	Status
City Hall	Mel	Mel	Complete
Opera House	Gerianne Smart	Mel	Complete
Police	George Merkel	Mel	Stacy will edit
Fire	Jim Breuer	Mel	Complete
Health - VARS	Tony Korda	Mel	Complete
Health - other	Little City Practice	Alex	Not needed - complete
Public Works	Jim Larrow	Mel	Complete
Water	VPWD	Alex & Mel	Mel will follow up
Wastewater	Mel	Mel	Complete
Storm Drainage	Mike	Mike	Complete
Solid Waste	ACSWMD	Mel/Shannon	In progress
Parks & Rec.	Recreation Committee	Alex & Mel	Alex/Mel will follow up
Boys & Girls Club	Mike Reiderer	Shannon	Complete
Bixby Library	Jane Spencer	Stacy	Stacy will follow up
Education	ANWSU	Shannon	Rebecca will edit
Energy	Mike	Mike	Complete
Park & Ride	Jason	Jason	In progress

At January's meeting, Alex asked if it made sense to review the pending change items that the group has collected since the adoption of the current zoning and subdivision regulations. Everyone agreed that it would be helpful to do so. Shannon provided the list, explaining that there are only three items that would be potential changes for the plan. Alex asked if we should review those three items at once, or if we should handle them as we review the districts. Everyone agreed that it would be better to review them when we got to their respective section.

In the Residential/Limited Business, Central Business and Commercial districts, it was agreed to add "Professional Service" as an allowed conditional use.

Discussion then focused on language in the CBD section. Alex asked everyone's thoughts about the use of "strongly encouraged" versus "required". She stated that in her opinion, "required" provides a more defensible argument for both the plan and the regulations. Everyone agreed that our recommendation would include those changes where appropriate.

In the CBD, the fourth bullet-point on page 80 was changed from "In the event of catastrophic disaster, it is our goal that multiple-story buildings are strongly encouraged in this district to maximize developable space and encourage a diversity of uses" to, "Building heights shall be maintained similar to those seen historically on any given lot. For undeveloped lots, no building shall be less than two stories"

The discussion then turned to the seventh and eighth bullet-points on page 80, regarding loft apartments and residential uses on the ground floor. Ultimately, it was suggested that we revisit these bullet-points in March, when we could ask Jason his recollection of events during the 2009 plan re-write regarding these items.

In the Commercial District, the first bullet-point on page 81 was amended from "Development and redevelopment shall encourage designs, which produce a desirable relationship between individual buildings, the circulation systems and adjacent residential areas." to, "Development and redevelopment shall not create an undue burden with adjacent residential areas."

The project calendar for the municipal development plan update was reviewed and updated to revisit outstanding sections of chapter three and resume our review of chapter five, beginning with the Northern Gateway District at the March meeting. Shannon stated that he had made all the changes to date that the Planning Commission had recommended, on a working copy of the document with the exception being charts and photographs, which have not yet been updated. He said he would contact Natalie Steen at LandWorks to determine if she could provide the data points for all the charts.

Committee Updates:

Transportation: No update at this time.

Education: No update at this time.

Tree/Urban Forestry: Shannon stated that he had communicated with Mike before he left on vacation. Mike reported that the Lake Champlain Committee did not receive the grant which would have been used to help complete the City tree inventory.

New Business: Shannon said that he had been contacted by Claire Tebbs from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission. She would like to attend the Planning Commission's April meeting to review Low Impact Development Review guidelines with us.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mel Hawley, Clerk