

**CITY OF VERGENNES
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2016**

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

Members Absent: John Coburn

Also Present: Mel Hawley, Zoning Administrator

Shannon called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He stated that Greg White from Green Mountain Power who was scheduled to attend the meeting was unable to attend. He then asked if there were any other amendments to the agenda. No amendments to the agenda were brought forth.

The minutes to the regular meeting of March 28, 2016 were reviewed. Cheryl moved to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Mike with all voting in favor except for Morgan abstaining as she was not in attendance at the March meeting.

The Planning Commission next began to discuss items that should be considered as updates to the Municipal Development Plan.

- 1) Incorporation of a solar siting entry: Cheryl presented a revised entry developed from discussion at last month's meeting. Mel suggested adding policies for the section based on the proposed entry. Cheryl and Shannon volunteered to develop policies for review at the May meeting. The group then discussed Mike's idea of creating a green energy overlay district. Mike suggested that it should apply to any projects larger than 15KW in size and that the following districts be considered desirable locations for such projects: AGR, IND, LDR, NG, and PUB. He added that areas also in the Flood Hazard Overlay district should be excluded. Shannon volunteered to draft language for the district to be reviewed at the May meeting.
- 2) Updated language for materials management entry: Cheryl provided a copy of the final draft of the entry that was presented in February.

The Planning Commission discussed the status of a city sidewalk survey and inventory. They reviewed the assessments submitted by Jay Stetzel, Assistant Principal of VUHS. At Tim's suggestion, the group decided they would re-assess sections that have multiple assessment scores. They will identify where the different assessments start and stop by address. This information will be forwarded to Mike who volunteered to create a Google Map with the different assessments by section/area. This map will be submitted to the City Council to help

prioritize areas for sidewalk improvement.

The group then discussed the interpretation of Section 307 – “Time Limit on Zoning Permits” in the City of Vergennes Zoning and Subdivision Regulations. Mel shared two recent situations where there were questions regarding whether or not the Zoning Administrator was empowered to grant a one-time, one year extension to previously issued zoning permits. In one situation it was determined that an extension would be justified as the property owner was delayed by the Act 250 permitting process and this process should be considered “substantially started”. The group recommended either defining the terms “substantially started” and “substantially completed” in the next iteration of the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations or possibly eliminating that sentence requiring that projects be “substantially started” within a year of issuance of the zoning permit..

Transportation items update – No update.

Education items update – No update.

Stormwater items update – No update

Tree/Urban Forestry items update – No update.

Materials Management items update – Cheryl reported that starting in July 2016, mobile recycling facilities that accept both recycling and trash will need to accept leaf and yard waste. This will affect the Vergennes mobile facility, but could represent a business opportunity for the current trash hauler.

Shannon welcomed Morgan back to active duty following her eight-month leave of absence.

No new business was brought forward.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mel Hawley, Clerk