

**CITY OF VERGENNES
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2015**

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

Members Absent: Jason Farrell

Also Present: Mel Hawley, Zoning Administrator, Megan Kittredge

Shannon called the special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Mike asked that the agenda be amended to include discussions of the planned redevelopment of Gevry Trailer Park in Waltham and wastewater treatment issues in Vergennes. The agenda was amended to include these items.

The minutes to the special meeting of May 18, 2015 were reviewed. John moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Morgan with all voting in favor.

The planning commission continued reviewing potential regulation changes from the “parking lot” of items that have been cataloged over the past several years.

- Section 1204.4: regarding parking or loading spaces be no closer than twenty-five feet to the property line abutting the residential district. After lengthy discussion, the group decided to emulate language in Article 1501.C regarding setback waivers. It is hoped that making this change will provide guidance to the development review board when considering applications. Additionally the section was amended to note that it applies to properties abutting residential uses instead of residential districts.
- Section 1204.5: no parking is allowed in front of the front face of the principal building. Parking may be allowed in side yards adjacent to the principal building only if allowed by the development review board. No changes were proposed.
- Section 1205: location and width of driveways. Cheryl provided draft language that includes dimensional standards of a minimum width for driveways of twelve feet, length of twenty feet and vertical clearance of fourteen feet. Additionally Cheryl proposed the section should be renamed “Location and Dimensions of Driveways. Everyone agreed.
- Section 1206: Open storage in residential districts. Again, the group spent a great deal of time discussing this section with the hope of making the section less arbitrary. Shannon provided draft language for review. This led to a lengthy discussion of the current section and how it tries to cover multiple goals in one sentence. It was agreed that the section should be re-worded to more effectively convey the three main points of 1) size of vehicles stored outside, 2) handling of unregistered vehicle storage and 3) storage of specialty motor vehicles such as race cars. Additionally the section was broadened to cover all districts, not just residential districts.

- Section 312.B.3 Fences and Walls. The group discussed the section and initially there were multiple interpretations of the intent of the section. After reading through the section more carefully, everyone agreed that the section did not need to be changed.
- Section 1611.C: Dimensional standards regarding setbacks of 100 feet abutting residential districts. In May's meeting Shannon suggested that the planning commission make a recommendation at the June meeting. Through oversight this section was not discussed in the June meeting and will be re-visited in the July meeting.

Shannon stated that he had updated the WORD document version of the regulation with "track changes" enabled to capture all the recommended changes thus far and would add the most recent changes. The parts that have recommended changes will be printed out and scanned to make the file small enough to email and will be included in everyone's information packet for the July meeting.

The planning commission ended discussion of regulations and proceeded to the timeline for completion of the zoning and subdivision regulations update. Shannon and Mel stated that the group was still on track to deliver updated regulations by the end of September.

Shannon asked if the group would consider forming an energy committee or if the planning commission ought to take on the role of an energy committee. He noted that during the May meeting the group discussed a solar mapping project and that while the Public Service Board ultimately has the authority on new solar and other energy developments, that it might be beneficial for the City to have already outlined its preferences as to types and locations. Everyone agreed that this was a good idea and that it should be pursued after the regulation update is completed.

Shannon informed the group about the Strong Communities, Better Connections steering committee meeting which was held on June 3, 2015. Toole Design Group led the meeting and Shannon outlined some of the highlights of the meeting. Mel said that he would email the meeting notes to everyone.

Shannon informed the group about the Weeks School Master Plan kick-off meeting which was held on May 7, 2015. LandWorks led the meeting and Shannon outlined some of the highlights. Mel said that he would email the meeting notes to everyone.

Mike brought up the subject of the former Gevry Trailer Park property in Waltham that is being considered for redevelopment. He said the planning commission should be aware of the project and that he didn't know much about it other than what he had read in the newspaper. Mel provided an update to everyone and stated that he had attended the recent Waltham Development Review Board public hearing on the project where he informed them that the City Council desired there be a formal sewer connection agreement between the property owner and the City of Vergennes. Mike added that he thought the proposed development could be beneficial for Vergennes, particularly the school system as it would likely bring additional students into the system.

The discussion on Gevry Park led to a discussion of the Vergennes wastewater treatment system

and recent issues surrounding overflows. Using an aerial photo of the City, Mel showed the group the location of all existing pump stations and the areas that they cover. He also pulled up graphs using the on-line data communication service showing pump activity by day and time to explain how infiltration of stormwater can tax the existing system. He talked about the 1272 Order issued by the Agency of Natural Resources that is in place and how the City is currently testing and monitoring the system in an attempt to identify infiltration sources.

Transportation Committee update – Shannon noted that there was a Transportation Task Force meeting on May 27th that he had been unable to attend and that he hadn't seen any notes or minutes to it, so he couldn't update the group.

Education Committee update – No update

Stormwater Committee update – Mike reported that the assessment of the Crosby Farm stormwater collection system and retention pond project was still on schedule.

Tree/Urban Forestry Committee update – Mike and Tim said that some trees in the basin had come down in recent storms and that the Basin Task Force was still holding regular meetings and had recently been doing some cleanup projects.

Materials Management Committee update – No update

No new business was brought up.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mel Hawley, Clerk