

**CITY OF VERGENNES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2014**

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

Members Absent: Cheryl Brinkman

Also Present: Mel Hawley, Zoning Administrator

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

The minutes to the regular meeting of September 22, 2014 were reviewed. Mike moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by John with all voting in favor except Rebecca, abstaining as she was not present at the meeting.

Shannon relayed that Mel's appointment as Zoning Administrator had lapsed at the end of June. In accordance with 24 V.S.A Section 4448 – Appointment and powers of administrative officer, the Planning Commission must nominate an administrative officer to the City Council who has the power to appoint an administrative officer for a three-year term. Shannon asked if anyone wanted to discuss the process or if anyone wanted to make a motion to nominate Mel. Jason moved to nominate Mel as Zoning Administrator to the City Council for a three-year term commencing on July 1, 2014 and extending to June 30, 2017. The motion was seconded by Mike with all voting in favor. Shannon said he would deliver the nomination to the City Council at their next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 28, 2014.

Shannon and Mel talked about the status of the municipal development plan. The City Council held its final public hearing on Tuesday, September 30, 2014. It was noted that Dan Pflaster provided testimony regarding residential uses on the ground floor in the Northern Gateway District, but that after discussion, the City Council moved to adopt the plan without further changes.

Shannon then stated that the Addison County Regional Planning Commission was in the process of reviewing the plan as part of the requirements for eligibility to the Strong Communities, Better Connections Grant. He said the ACRPC was scheduling a public hearing in Vergennes on Monday, November 10, 2014 as part of the review process. There was a great deal of discussion regarding whether or not such a review was required by statute, or if it was just a best practice to pursue. Shannon reported that he had received the initial review notes from Claire Tebbs of the ARCPC and that he would provide copies to everyone. Jason asked if they could be emailed.

Jason expressed concern that the recommendations in the review came after the plan was already

adopted by the City and asked if a better process would be to have the review take place at the time of the Planning Commission's public hearing when there would be time to incorporate the recommendations in the proposed plan. Mike asked if there was a process in place to keep track of those recommendations for the next plan update or re-write. Morgan asked why the meeting needed to be timed ahead of the Planning Commission's regular meeting for November. Shannon explained that the ACRPC was having a full membership meeting on Wednesday, November 12, 2014 and there was a desire to have the review completed prior to that meeting so the board could vote on the plan.

Next came a procedural question regarding if the Vergennes Planning Commission was responsible to warn and moderate the public hearing. Shannon said that in his communications with Claire, it was his understanding that this responsibility resides with the ACRPC. He added that he would confirm this with Claire.

Shannon updated everyone on the City's application for the Strong Communities, Better Connections Grant. He stated that the application had been completed and submitted on time and that everything was in process.

The group reviewed the "Rules of Procedure". No one had any proposed amendments. The Planning Commission is scheduled to readopt the rules at the November organizational meeting.

Next the group discussed priorities over next six months. Shannon provided everyone with the "pending" items list in regard to zoning regulations that had been compiled over the past two years. He suggested that we incorporate these items as we review the regulations. John asked what should be reviewed for November's meeting. After a brief discussion, it was suggested that everyone be ready to discuss Article I.

Additionally, the group discussed the policy matrix and how that had evolved into the committees formed to address policies on Transportation, Education, Stormwater and Tree/Urban Forestry. Mel offered to provide a copy of the matrix to anyone who wanted one.

Mike updated the group on Urban Forestry Project. The student volunteers are scheduled to make a presentation of the project during the November meeting. Mike and Mel then updated everyone on grant applications that are being prepared for an assessment of the stormwater system associated with Crosby farms as that stormwater permit is in the name of the City. Both the urban forestry and stormwater projects are a direct result of the committee work.

Under new business Mel stated that to be in compliance with the state's open meeting laws, the Planning Commission needs to include in their agendas a spot to adopt and/or update the agenda. Everyone agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mel Hawley, Clerk