

**CITY OF VERGENNES
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING AND ANNUAL MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2014**

Members Present: Shannon Haggett-Chair, Mike Winslow-Vice Chair, Morgan Kittredge, Tim Cook, Rebecca Rey, Jason Farrell (arrived at 7:25 p.m.)

Members Absent: John Coburn, Cheryl Brinkman

Also Present: Mel Hawley, Zoning Administrator

Shannon Haggett called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The minutes to the regular meeting and annual meeting of November 17, 2014 were reviewed. Morgan moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Tim with all voting in favor.

Shannon reconvened the annual reorganization meeting so the group could review the proposed amendments to the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure. Mel had drafted amended rules to conform to the State's new open meeting law. Mike moved to adopt the amended Rules of Procedure. The motion was seconded by Tim with all voting in favor.

The planning commission discussed Article XVI of the current Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to propose changes to reconcile them with the current municipal development plan:

Section 1604.D: propose to change "One-Family Dwelling: 7,000 sq. ft./unit" to "One-Family Dwelling: 7,000 sq. ft."

Section 1604.F.5: propose to change "New buildings shall contain..." to "New buildings except for accessory structures shall contain..."

Section 1604.F.11-14: The group engaged in a great deal of discussion regarding demolition in the Historic Neighborhood District and what the authorized process should be. Mike volunteered to draft some proposed language for group to review at the January meeting. Jason noted that the planning commission should consider the scope of the entire city in regard to demolition.

Section 1609.B: Shannon noted that "Dentist/Professional Service" should be added as a Conditional Use for the district as there is an existing dentist's office in operation as outlined in the group's "parking lot" of items to address.

Section 1609.F.2.e: there was a lengthy discussion regarding how to effectively change the regulations to allow for ground floor residential uses as outlined in the new plan. Shannon volunteered to draft some proposed language for group to review at the January meeting.

Section 1613.E: Jason noted that the development review board has had difficulty in interpreting this sub-section. Mel added that he has experienced multiple people coming away with different

understandings of this sub-section and in his mind it should be re-worded for clarity. After a great deal of time spent talking about the wording and the intent, Shannon suggested that this sub-section be tabled for now and revisited in January.

Section 1613.E.3: in accordance with the new municipal development plan, propose to change “Ground floor residential is not allowed for new development except as part of a PUD.” to “Ground floor residential use is not allowed in this district.”

Section 1614: rename to “Low Density Residential District” from “Agricultural and Rural Residential Overly PUD District”. Tim also added that any references to “AGR PUD” within the document be changed to “LDR”.

Section 1614.A: propose to remove the current definition/purpose and replace it with the definition/purpose that is in the current plan.

Tim asked if there was a reason that the districts in the plan are in a different order than in the regulations. Shannon said that there was no reason and that we would rearrange their order to match the plan.

The board revisited the proposed Vermont Buildings and General Services Vergennes Solar Project. Shannon reiterated that the proposed project seems to pre-empt the development of a master plan for the property as directed by the Legislature. Mel stated that the City Council was scheduled to discuss the project at their next meeting and that Mayor Benton was alerting our legislative representatives regarding the project given its proposal before a master plan is prepared.

Under committee updates, Rebecca reported that it was announced at the last Transportation Committee meeting that Vergennes was awarded third place for the VTrans Strong Communities, Better Connections (SCBC) grant. The grant award is \$40,500; the application was for \$80,000. Mel noted that the City Council was scheduled to discuss the grant at their next meeting and to decide whether or not to accept the grant, and if so, reaffirm the 10 percent local matching funds. The scope of the project will change due to the reduced funding, but the planning commission agreed that it would be worthwhile to accept the grant.

Mike reported that he and Mel attended the final presentation from the UVM students who conducted the urban forestry project earlier this year. Both were impressed with the presentations and the professionalism of the students. Shannon asked if the promised reports were available. Mike responded that they were not complete yet and they would be forthcoming.

There was no new business presented.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mel Hawley, Clerk