

**CITY OF VERGENNES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2015**

Members Present: Shannon Haggett-Chair, Mike Winslow-Vice Chair, Jason Farrell,  
Cheryl Brinkman

Members Absent: Tim Cook, John Coburn, Morgan Kittredge (on an approved leave of  
absence)

Also Present: Mel Hawley, Zoning Administrator

Shannon called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. No amendments to the agenda were brought forth.

The minutes to the regular meeting and annual meeting of November 23, 2015 were reviewed. Cheryl pointed out two typographical errors and provided corrections. Mike moved to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Cheryl with all voting in favor.

The Planning Commission next began to discuss items that should be considered as updates to the Municipal Development Plan from the list of priorities generated at last month's meeting.

- 1) Solar siting. Shannon stated that he and Cheryl hadn't put anything together yet for solar siting and will have draft language at a future meeting.
- 2) Updated language for materials management to conform with state regulations that are currently being phased in. Cheryl presented a draft entry for solid waste or materials management. The group reviewed and discussed the section which includes information on Act 148. The discussion then focused on the City's potential role in handling leaf and yard waste. Cheryl stated that she wanted to also review and possibly update the goals for the section and will present those at a future meeting.
- 3) Designated Downtown. The City's Designated Downtown status is set to expire in 2017 and this would be an ideal time to update the plan to reflect current needs surrounding this designation. Shannon noted that he had mentioned this to Amy Bodette-Barr, Marketing and Development Director for the Vergennes Partnership, and Mel added that they will be developing a work plan soon.
- 4) Developing a vision or plan for City-owned properties. Shannon reported that John was going to present a plan for public outreach and engagement to help the Planning Commission get much-needed public input on what to do with certain City-owned properties, as well as other priority items. He added that John was unable to attend the December meeting and would make his presentation at a future meeting.
- 5) Incorporation of recommendations from the Strong Communities, Better Connections (SCBC) program. Shannon, Mike and Mel informed everyone that there had been a

meeting of the steering committee for the SCBC program earlier in the month and the Toole Design Group had presented the draft of their report to the committee. Shannon passed around a hardcopy of the preliminary draft to the Planning Commission. They added that the next step is a public forum led by the Toole Design Group either in January or February, but the exact date had not yet been determined.

- 6) Incorporation of an updated Urban Forestry Plan using information from the recent UVM tree survey. Shannon and Mike reported that they had originally planned to meet with Claire Tebbs from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission on December 21, 2015 but the meeting didn't occur. The meeting has been rescheduled for the first week of January.
- 7) Stormwater/Wastewater recommendations. Jason presented a draft entry for this section. He reported that he had researched proposed state legislation which would prioritize funding to municipalities which have management plans or mechanisms in place. He contended that it would be advantageous for the City to develop a more comprehensive plan not only because it would be environmentally responsible to do so, but that it could also be economically responsible to do so. He added that he had looked at current municipal development plans for Charlotte and Middlebury and he would like to emulate some of the themes and language from those plans for Vergennes. The group then discussed the perceptions and realities of the City's stormwater and wastewater issues and agreed that the entry should be used to educate the public on where we are, what we have already done, as well as some of the challenges ahead.

Transportation items update – Shannon had included in the information packet a copy of Mayor Benton's proposal for a Northerly VT Route 22A/VT Route 17 Truck By-pass, which has been submitted to the Vermont Secretary of Transportation. The group reviewed the proposal and briefly discussed the potential benefits to Vergennes if the proposal is implemented. They also discussed possible opposition from communities along VT Route 17.

Education items update – No update.

Stormwater items update – Update covered in the Stormwater section above. Mike added that the final report from Otter Creek Engineering for the Crosby Farms Detention Pond Project has been completed and submitted.

Tree/Urban Forestry items update – Update covered in the Urban Forestry section above.

Materials Management items update – Update covered in the Materials Management section above.

No new business was discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mel Hawley, Clerk