

January 7, 2016

PC Members Present: Jean Vissering (Chair), Julie Potter, Jay Stewart, Scott Hess, Norm Hill, Ray Stout, Kim Watson, Jack Pauly

Others Present: Kristi Flynn (Recording Clerk)

Call to order: 7:03pm

Changes to Agenda – Review 11/19 minutes

Public Comment – The Chair noted with sadness the passing of Betsy Catlin

Discussion on 2016 Municipal Planning Grant: Consultant selection, PC actions needed

The CVRPC would like to work on the PC's project and has now hired a Senior Planner. The PC has two options: hire the CVRPC or send out an RFP for an outside consultant. The goal for the grant is to come up with a village plan and language for village zoning. The PC had a discussion regarding hiring the CVRPC versus looking for an outside consultant.

Motion: I move to recommend hiring the CVRPC as the consultant for implementing the town's Municipal Planning Grant and inviting them to our next meeting. Made: Mr. Hill, second: Mr. Hess

Vote on Motion: Passed 8-0

The PC will invite the director of the CVRPC and the senior planner to the next PC meeting to develop a plan and timeline. Invite the Village Committee members to the official kick-off meeting.

Review and Finalize Draft PC Report for 2015 Annual Town Report

Motion: I move to accept the draft PC report as written with any small revisions made at the discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair prior to submission. Made: Mr. Hess, second: Mr. Hill

Vote on Motion: Passed 8-0

Update on BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar Project

The PSB is reviewing the GMP cap and the clock has not started yet. The PC plans to file a motion to intervene, which puts the developer on notice. PC needs to focus on what is important; there isn't strong language in the Town Plan regarding what the town wants/doesn't want in terms of solar projects. PC can use this as a learning experience; probably can't block the project (if wanted) but can hopefully improve it. Per Mr. Stout (an abutter), most of his neighbors seem okay with the project. PC would like to consider adding the following conditions:

- Trees will not be cleared
- Landscaping plan is confirmed/maintained
- Location of pole on the road
- De-commissioning process outlined

The Chair agreed to revise the draft Motion to Intervene letter for review at the next meeting. The PC members should review the PSB application for discussion at the next meeting. Mr. Stout recused himself for the motion.

Motion: I move that the PC file a Motion to Intervene and that the Chair bring a draft letter to the next meeting. Made: Ms. Potter, second: Ms. Watson

Vote on Motion: Passed 7-0; Mr. Stout recused himself

Discussion on East Montpelier Center Traffic Speed Concerns in Context of Town Plan

The SB is considering lowering the speed limit through EM Center and would like a statement from the PC on why the lower limit is warranted, i.e., historic character. The PC came up with several options besides a lower speed limit:

- Stripe the road narrower
- 4-way stop at Barnes/Bliss roads
- Increase signage coming into the Center
- Suggest SB get some expert advice on the issue

Motion: I move to send the following statement to the SB: "Whereas East Montpelier Center is identified in the Town Plan as a small village that is quiet, rural, residential and agricultural in character, and in the CV Regional Plan as a Hamlet (small concentrated, primarily residential settlements); therefore the Center has a distinctive character, which is important to our town. We recommend appropriate traffic calming measures that retain the settlement's historic, aesthetic, rural and residential character." Made: Ms. Potter, second: Mr. Watson

Vote on Motion: Passed 8-0

Discussion on Town-Owned Winston/Silberberg Property

The town now officially owns the property. There will be a field trip on Saturday, January 9th at 10am to walk some of 48 acres and tour the existing farmhouse.

Discussion of Potential EM SignPost Article; Deadline for Submission January 25, 2016

Ms. Watson agreed to draft an article for review at the next meeting.

Discussion on 2016 Town Meeting: Planning Commissioner Election Candidates and Process

PC members up for election: Ms. Watson, Ms. Potter, Mr. Hill and Mr. Stout. Petition forms are due January 25th at 5pm with 25 signatures. Candidates also need to submit a brief piece for the SignPost on why you're running and your background. These can be emailed to Edie Miller and the deadline is also January 25th.

Update on 2015 Amendments to EM Land Use & Development Regulations

The amendments were passed and adopted by the SB. Updated regulations were given to the PC.

Update on CVRPC – Ms. Potter

The CVRPC is still working on the 2016 regional plan. The next meeting will focus on Housing, then Energy (solar is a big issue).

Review Minutes

November 19, 2015

Motion: I move to approve the minutes as amended. Made: Ms. Watson, second: Mr. Stewart

Vote on Motion: Passed 5-0, 3 abstained

December 3, 2015

Motion: I move to approve the minutes as amended. Made: Ms. Potter, second: Mr. Hill

Vote on Motion: Passed 7-0, 1 abstained

ZA Report

40 permits for 2015

DRB Report

- Nothing new to report
- Next meeting is Feb 2 – need volunteer from PC; Mr. Stout volunteered; Chair will confirm that more than 3 PC members can attend DRB meetings at the same time

Motion to Adjourn. Made: Mr. Hess, second: Ms. Watson. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Clerk