

February 4, 2016

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

Others Present: Bruce Johnson (Zoning Administrator), Kristi Flynn (Recording Clerk), Kate McCarthy, Andrew Thomas, Doug Moses, Will Cole

Call to order: 7:00pm

Changes to Agenda – None

Public Comment – None

Planning and Zoning Presentation by & Discussion with Kate McCarthy, Sustainable Communities Program Director for the Vermont Natural Resources Council

Ms. McCarthy's goals: use land most efficiently, provide options for more development in the village, compact settlements

Thoughts and suggestions regarding village zoning without wastewater:

- Lot sizes less than 1 acre
 - Consider shared septic
 - Town could help with financing
 - Encourage collaboration among neighbors
 - *Wastewater Solutions for Vermont Communities* has some options – see page 7
- In-fill – make lot sizes smaller to increase village density
- Some small towns to look at for examples of zoning without wastewater:
 - Waitsfield
 - Newfane – 1 acre minimum lot size
 - Calais – no minimum lot size
- Winston property – think creatively about uses that go together and what kind of system would support it
 - Different uses in the same building
 - Gathering places
 - What's missing in the village
 - Look at Danville's village zoning regulations
 - Incentivize certain uses
- Simplify the regulations – include checklists and flow charts
- Neighborhood Development Area – 1/4 mile outside the Village Designation Area
 - Look at the development possibilities in that area
- Dimensional standards
 - Form creates place – Shelburne Road is an example where pedestrians feel disconnected
 - Better examples – Middlebury and Montpelier where stores are near the sidewalk, cars drive slower
 - These standards include setbacks or a build-to line
 - Road speed – consider changing Route 2/14 to a Class 1 town highway instead of a state highway
 - Town has more signage options
- Design standards
 - Aesthetics – historic look
 - Help create a village feel – i.e., require entrance to be at the front versus the back
 - Example is Georgia – created a south village core district
 - A 2nd story is required and parking must be at the side or rear
- Growth Area – Gallison Hill
 - Adjacent Montpelier area is 1/3-acre lots
 - What type of growth is there now and what type do you want in the future
 - What kind of growth needs to be accommodated
 - Where do you want growth to happen
 - Conserved land is a constraint in the Gallison Hill area
 - Important to offer multiple housing options
- Senior housing with a daycare center – could deal with aging in the community
- Make it easy for people to do the right thing
- Strip Development
 - Location – if you need to drive and park, it is a less efficient use of the land
 - Attract any type of business but use design standards for the look you want
 - Act 250 has a definition of strip development

- Think of different uses in the village versus outside the village
- 3rd Place Concept – 1st place is our home, 2nd place is our place of work, 3rd place is where we'd like to gather

Discussion with Andrew Thomas, representing BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar, LLC regarding the issues outlined in the Planning Commission's Motion to Intervene in the proceeding for the BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar, LLC 500kW Solar Array PSB CPG Application

Mr. Thomas came to the PC to talk about his project in the village. He has worked on solar projects of varying sizes. Regarding the PC's concern about this property being prime wastewater land, Mr. Thomas noted that the land would be difficult to build houses on, though it does have septic capacity. He is open to granting an easement to the upper corner for a septic system. He has contracted to purchase all six lots with mostly in-state investors.

Additional concerns from PC's Motion to Intervene letter:

- Aesthetics
 - Largest of 3 poles will be placed behind a 58' tree (pole will be approximately 32' high and include the transformer)
 - The pole along the road will match those on the road today, just wires, no equipment
 - The road will be residential grade and mostly used for the construction and annual inspections
 - There will be no concrete pads, some posts may be driven into concrete for stability but it won't be seen
 - Regarding burying the lines, Mr. Thomas would have to bore under Route 2
 - One possibility would be to have one pole at the road, then bury the lines to the project
 - Pros/cons of burying lines: major con is the increase in cost, a pad-mount transformer would be needed on the ground
 - GMP is responsible for the equipment to the transformer, BDE is responsible for maintenance of the road
 - The intention is to combine the lots
 - There will be no additional structures on the lot(s)
 - Mr. Thomas agreed to install dark grey equipment; will send a chip to the PC prior to installation
 - Mr. Thomas agreed to increase the height of the shrubs to 3-4' high
 - Regarding a maintenance plan, Mr. Thomas noted that the landscaping will be verified at the end of the project
 - A 3-year follow-up can be added as a condition on the CPG, but Mr. Thomas/BDE cannot guarantee it will happen if the project is sold in the interim
 - Mowing will occur 1-2 times per year
 - There will be annual inspections of the equipment, and possibly some routine maintenance
 - Landscaping will go in last; prompt installation means the next growing season
- Decommissioning Plan
 - It is not required for a project this size, though BDE has an agreement in place with the landowner and investors where all the equipment will be removed except for the 3 poles when the time come for decommissioning
 - Mr. Thomas will send the Chair the language from the agreement via e-mail

The PC discussed sending in additional comments in support of the project in light of the concessions made by the developer.

Mr. Stout recused himself from the motion and vote.

Motion: I move to authorize the Chair to draft a follow-up letter to the PSB recognizing the mitigation efforts made by BDE as discussed. Made: Ms. Potter, second: Mr. Hill

Vote on Motion: Passed 8-0-1; Mr. Stout abstained

Brief Review of CVRPC Proposed Village Master Plan Draft Scope of Work (2016 Municipal Planning Grant)

PC reviewed the document and made some minor changes.

Task 1 – invite key players not the whole community

Task 3 – include maps in the summary report

Task 4 – include 'planning' scenarios

Task 7 – change 'possible' to 'proposed'

Motion: I move to approve the Scope of Work with the amendments discussed tonight. Made: Mr. Stout, second: Mr. Hill

Vote on Motion: Passed 9-0

The PC discussed appointing a member of the PC to keep the project on track and be a liaison with the CVRPC. Ms. Potter volunteered and will be listed as the primary contact on the Scope of Work document.

Motion: I move to authorize the Chair to sign the Agreement for Planning Services by and between the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and the Town of East Montpelier, Vermont. Made: Mr. Hess, second: Mr. Lane

Vote on Motion: Passed 9-0

Review Minutes

January 21, 2016

Tabled to the next meeting

ZA Report

3 permits for 2016

DRB Report

- Approved Laquerre subdivision
- Approve conditional use review for a platform and tipi for Orchard Valley

Motion to Adjourn. Made: Mr. Lane, second: Ms. Watson. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Clerk