

May 19, 2016

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

Others Present: Kristi Flynn (Recording Clerk), Eric Vorwald, Michael Lazar

Call to order: 7:00pm

Changes to Agenda – None

Public Comment – None

Discussion with Michael Lazar Regarding the Public Service Board's Certificate of Public Good Proceedings on the BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar, LLC Application for a 500kW Solar Array on the Cassani Property at the South End of East Montpelier Village

Mr. Lazar came to the PC to ask that the PC withdraw the motion to intervene. Following are comments/suggestions made:

- Mr. Lazar feels the Cassani property will be used in the best manner; not easily developed for residential use
- Neighbors have all signed off on the project
- Would like to be a good neighbor: possible trails, septic on the property
- Motion to intervene is holding up the project
- Mr. Hill – PC has to decide how best to represent the town as instructed by the Town Plan
- Mr. Lazar – Sances was the only neighbor against it and now that Mr. Lazar has worked with him, he is happy
- Ms. Potter – PC appreciates Mr. Lazar coming to the town but the PC need to look at this property in the context of the Town Plan
- Mr. Stewart noted that Mr. Lazar is asking the PC to give up party status on the project
- PC and Mr. Lazar agreed that septic/sewer would be a good use of the land as the project will lock up the property for 25 years
- Mr. Vorwald noted that this project is not regionally significant to the CVRPC but doesn't see the harm in keeping party status

East Montpelier Village Master Plan: Village History & Current Conditions: Presentation by and Discussion with Eric Vorwald, CVRPC Senior Planner

Existing conditions in the village:

- Agriculture and forest lands are grouped together on the map
- Flags denote the location of historic properties – 2 Quaker meeting houses, cemeteries
- Old hydropower plant – 50 acres across from Towne Hill Road (other side of the river)
- Lot size – many are 2 acres or less
- Small lots in the upper village: 12 lots less than 1/4 acre, 33 lots between 1/4-1/2 acre, 50+ lots between 1/2-1 acre
- PC wondered about the total acreage of conserved/current use land – Eric will get that number as it will be important going forward
- PC also needs to be aware of other constraints
 - 2011 RPC study focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the village and areas of future development
 - More new constraints with the river corridor – no new structures, could do a river walk, park space
- There are not many named "neighborhoods" except the lower and upper village
- One size fits all zoning may not fit all areas
- Consider small pockets of commercial development in and around the village

East Montpelier Village Master Plan: Density/Pattern/Scale: Presentation by and Discussion with Eric Vorwald, CVRPC Senior Planner

Mr. Vorwald shared with the PC a visualizing density document to gauge what the upper limit the PC is comfortable with regarding housing units per acre. Density comes with height. 8 units per acre appeared to be the upper limit for the PC, though water and sewer solution would need to be found first.

East Montpelier Village Master Plan: Discussion on Fall Community Engagement Event

A fall event is scheduled for 7/21 from 5-9pm at the Fire Station. It will be an open house to get some feedback from the public, particularly getting reactions to density. The PC will gather information about what people are looking for in the town and there will be voting stations. The PC would like input on the village boundary and a sanity check on the previous village study: is that still what people want? Mr. Vorwald will bring some examples of Vermont village densities to the next meeting.

The second fall event will be in September, either 9/10 or 9/24. 9/24 appears to be better for most PC members. The subcommittee is thinking about various activities. Possible name: Rally for the Village.

Summary Report on Vermont Planners Association Spring Workshop: The Future of Rural Vermont: Challenges and Choices, presentation by Julie Potter and Jean Vissering

The workshop was more geared to professional planners but some good language was received, particularly regarding allowing farms to do special events to promote farm products: tastings, weddings. This is already happening at Cate Farm and Willow Tree Farm.

Discussion of Potential EM SignPost Article for July/August Edition

PC needs to get in a teaser for the 7/21 meeting/open house event. A suggestion was made to have boxes for Save the Date for the Rally for the Village and the 7/21 open house instead of an article. Ms. Potter will check with Edie Miller.

Update on East Montpelier Old Laperle Farm Property Committee

Mr. Stout reported that the committee walked the property again at the last meeting. They are struggling with the septic issue, as EMSLI wants to build on the prime septic land. No one on the committee is knowledgeable on septic issues. Ms. Watson noted that Amy Macrellis from Stone Environmental is willing to meet with the committee and the SB is willing to pay her.

Update on East Montpelier Capital Improvement Committee

No update.

Review Minutes

May 5, 2016

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

Vote on Motion: Passed 9-0

ZA Report

5 new permits since last meeting

DRB Report

- May 17th was the continuance of the Orchard Valley hearing; the conditional use permit was denied
- June 7 meeting – Stouffer wants to build a dormer on a 200-year-old house and will need a waiver

Other Business

The PC received some documents from the VT Land Trust regarding a proposed conservation project on Drake Road. Fairmont Farm would like to conserve some property along Drake Road in Zone D and it is within the 1-mile radius of the village. The VT Land Trust feels it is a good candidate for farmland conservation as it is wet. For the PC's part in this, the PC could write a letter of concern to the VT Housing Conservation Board, who will meet in June to decide whether to fund this project or not. The land is already in current use. PC agreed to not fight this project but need to think about future parcels and how this might affect the master plan. The Chair will invite Britt from the VT Land Trust to a future PC meeting.

Motion to Adjourn. Made: Mr. Hill, second: Mr. Hess. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Clerk