

September 20, 2012

PC Members Present: Rick Hopkins (Chair), Tom Pierce, Gene Troia, Jack Pauly, Kim Watson, Scott Hess, Ken Santor, Mark Lane

Others Present: Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary), Julie Potter, Renee Carpenter, Norma Raymond, Paul Erlbaum, James Eniti, Bruce Johnson, Phillip Heinz, Kris Jensen, Deborah Fillion, Ross Hazel, Dina Bookmyer-Baker, Priscilla Gilbert, David Coburn, Flor Diaz Smith, Don Welch, Michael Duane, Carl Etnier, Nona Estrin, Dave Grundy

Call to Order: 7:00pm

Overview of Town Plan

- Introduction to tonight's meeting
- Importance of Town Plan: considered during Act 250 hearings

Overview of Two Meetings on draft Plan

Topics to be discussed at tonight's meeting:

- Community Resources
- Municipal Resources
- Public Services
- Comment period ends 10/20/12

These minutes include notes taken as well as flip chart notes.

Community Resources

Townpeople

- EMSLI is still an active group in town; still working on senior housing
- Add Jean Cate Community Fund Committee under Active Groups
 - Everything You Need to Know booklet
 - Provide lunch on Green Up Day
 - Gave \$500 to Front Porch Forum
 - Add Action: Continue Voter Orientation Day
- Move mention of Town Service Officer from Social Services to Townpeople
- Friends of Coburn Pond is an Active Group; protecting & preserving pond for public access; actions?
- Where should mention of Front Porch Forum go; as a way of communication?
- Town website: is it necessary because we have the SignPost website?

Recreation

- Recreation Board looking for guidance from the PC on what is needed for the Plan; can be whatever the RB wants its role to be
- RB has generally focused on sports
- Role with Coburn Pond; Renee Carpenter willing to craft some language
- Missing mention of boat access on Coburn Road; conserved by Vermont River Conservancy
- Goal: More communication to townspeople on natural resources for recreation
- Website would help with outreach and communication
- Wrightsville: Martha Israel is the town representative
- Carleton Smith Fund is a source of funds
- Survey responses – youth and sports as well as trails
- Baird, Benton and Soule properties should be mentioned as town property
 - Town has been acquiring property for recreation; note under Inventory
- Four Corners Schoolhouse has an active group of seniors who meet for weekly exercise program; many other activities – singing, concerts, Land Trust Annual Meeting
- Actions: 1) Friends of Coburn Pond protect & preserve the site in perpetuity, and 2) collaborate with other groups to include ecological awareness regarding recreational activities

Trails

- Action: put maps online – make EM a destination; most trails are on private property, use for specific trails; concern if too public
- Nona Estrin noted a few typos, such as 50 +/- acres
- Baird Town Forest – multi-use trail, not a path
- Trails were started to help save farming; EM Trails were founded in 1994
- Goal: keep current trails and expand as appropriate; explore new trails

Economic Development

- Move History in Town History to ED chapter
- Mention sidewalks in text – Village Committee; also mentioned in Transportation chapter
- Redundancy is a good thing; mention topics in more than one chapter
- North Montpelier – challenges are similar to EM Village; enhance paragraph with help of Renee Carpenter
- Goal: new bullet on exploring possibility of water/wastewater in North Montpelier

Historic Resources

- Show basic history of town and move specific histories to the chapters
- Town Govt/Finance – delete from this chapter
- Goals/Actions – look at previous Town Plans and evaluate
- Move Regional Issues when written

Municipal Resources

Town Government

- No comments

Finance

- Tax stabilization agreements – SB was empowered by townspeople
- Action – 3rd to last bullet – suggest remove or re-word to explain fully re: funding limits and define ratio
- Explore capital budgeting with Town Treasurer’s assistance; tie to specific goals; balance funding
- Farm contracts – remove ‘but largely duplicates’ and ‘outright elimination’
- Action: Consult town farmers and have representation on Farm Contract Study Committee
- Consolidate paragraph regarding Revolving Loan Fund
- Don Welch volunteered to provide data and Deb Fillion will create graphs for the chapter

Public Services

Education

- Goals/Actions: move towards 21st century technology
 - Send suggestion to school boards

Energy & Energy Resources

- Dave Grundy sent some changes that will be included in the next draft
- Goal: Energy efficiency of existing buildings; weatherization of rental properties
- New bullet for new buildings
- CVCLT loans for existing buildings for weatherization and accessibility
- CVCAC has a weatherization program for low-income residents
- Clarify – distinction between service areas between WEC and GMP – map defined by PSB

Transportation

- Conversion – remove Sodom Pond Road note
- Traffic count table is good
- Bridge project and Park N Ride – only include in Town Plan if plans are final

Social Services

- Move last Action to Townspeople chapter

Police & Disaster

- Hazard Mitigation Plan approved
- Goal: Make EMES the primary emergency shelter; does school upgrade include this?
- Vermont State Police contract - 40 hours per month; go to different parts of town based on residents’ concerns/requests
 - VSP tend to hover in town as officers use the ESF to write reports/use bathroom
- ESF could be used an emergency shelter

Fire Protection / Ambulance

- Trend data – add when available; EMFD reports to the SB quarterly
- Compare what has been reported in the Town Report
- Check with Town Administrator for current numbers

Solid Waste Disposal

- No comments

Land Use

Housing

- Mention home share program
- Senior housing
- Need 2010 census data on rental units
- Accessory dwellings/units allowed in all districts/zones
- Actions: discuss the action regarding ¼ acre lots in the Village; where infrastructure exists
- Do we want the plan to look forward? New technology for wastewater is out there – state is more conservative

Agriculture

- Tone is more positive
- VT's concept of Right to Farm

Comments

- Include hot links in a pdf version of the final Town Plan, particularly data sources
- Middlesex Town Plan – has graphs of survey responses in each chapter; possible model for EM
- Consider adding graphs for survey results

Motion to adjourn. Made by Ms. Watson; seconded by Mr. Lane. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:40p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Secretary