

October 4, 2012

PC Members Present: Rick Hopkins (Chair), Tom Pierce, Gene Troia, Jack Pauly, Kim Watson, Scott Hess, Jean Vissering

Others Present: Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary), Julie Potter, Renee Carpenter, Norma Raymond, Paul Erlbaum, Lindy Biggs, Steve Justis, Andrew Shapiro, Carolyn Shapiro, Seth Gardner, Ross Hazel, Bruce Johnson, Tim Jennings, Leanae Ponder, Laura Brown, Richard Hoffman, Jennifer Zollner, Meg Page

Call to Order: 7:00pm

Overview of Town Plan

- Introduction to tonight's meeting
- Importance of Town Plan: considered during Act 250 hearings, important if town is seeking grant funding

Overview of Two Meetings on draft Plan

Topics to be discussed at tonight's meeting:

- Land Use
- Natural Resources
- Comment period ends 10/20/12

Natural Resources

Water Supplies

- Letter dated 10/2/12 from Paul Erlbaum received by the PC
- Would like strong language in the Town Plan; don't water down the intent
- Goals are too general; be more specific
- Goal #2 – add monitoring; include IP's in discussions regarding water
- Action #7 – don't use state limit; use a specific 35,000 gallon limit
- When property with water rights changes hands, be sure town can review the permit again
- Continue to be an example for other towns; support for letter to PC
- Don't take our water for granted; seems like we have a lot now; other places have been destroyed by extraction
- Climate change is unpredictable; look to the future
- Talk with Senator Ginny Lyons about NAFTA issues
- Goal – proactively preserve and protect groundwater resources; stay on top of methods to naturally manage storm water
- Make strong goals and make actions take advantage of new technologies; stay on top of the issues
- Push for stronger protection of our water; preserve water for non-commercial use
- Use the same forward-thinking approach from the Energy chapter in the Water chapter

Scenic

- Use the wording: the 6-acre swimming hold known as Coburn Pond, not former gravel pit; change in other places in the Plan
- Appreciation of mention of North Montpelier; East Montpelier = East Montpelier Village, North Montpelier = North Montpelier Village

Wetlands / Waterways / Wildlife

- No talk of protecting ponds, Winooski River and Kingsbury Branch, including buffer zones (like Calais)
- Consider specific water protection zoning regulations
- Action – explore methods to control storm run-off with new and innovative methods

Earth Resources

- Add geological and groundwater mapping to the chapter
- Add Geology to the title; expand chapter regarding descriptions of the geology in the town; reference the map

Forest Resources

- Invasive species – keeping track of potential dangers
- Discussion of insects/pests & diseases affecting the forests

Land Use

Wastewater Disposal

- Another place to mention surface water protection; protect the riparian zone; maybe belongs in Wetlands chapter
- Goal #2 – include North Montpelier Village for wastewater solution
- No mention of 2005 ordinance; Sewage Officer still enforces under that ordinance; find actual title of ordinance
- Town still enforces its old permits
- Final draft will include total permit figures

Agriculture

- Some seeds made by Monsanto have their own pesticides in them
- Genetically modified seeds (GMO) affect the land around them; alert the townspeople re: where they are planted
- Legislature was not able to ban these seeds; someone should research an EM moratorium from 5-6 years ago on planting GMO seeds; what can town legally do?
- Townspeople have concerns – add paragraph about protecting our organic farms and discussion about GMO issues as they affect the town
- State statutes limits town restrictions on agriculture
- Protect agriculture land from development
- Add to crops in town: herbs and flowers, berries

Villages & Growth Areas

- Add Post Office in North Montpelier as business in town
- Add goal of exploring water and wastewater in North Montpelier Village
- Add goal – North Montpelier Village signs; historic marker for village and singing bridge being installed this year

Housing

- EMSLI paragraph – change units from 15 to 21, based on 2007 market analysis
- Goal – coordinate building needs in the town; mentioned anywhere in the Plan?
- Town building needs to be reviewed
- Capital Planning & Budgeting to be done by PC; possible mention in Finance chapter
- Goal #3 – include “and low-income residents”

Land Use Patterns & Zoning

- Change to North Montpelier Village
- Conservation overlay – include language regarding Coburn Pond; consider changing zone so as to protect the area of the pond; constructed wetland needs to be protected; needs clarification of conservation zone
- Wildlife corridors versus development; think about that re: where development happens; blocks of unfragmented land
- Last goal – needs stronger language regarding strip development
- Include discussion on riparian buffer zones here, as well

Comments

- Regulations – make certain references to permit reviews for groundwater permits changing hands
- Be consistent – East Montpelier Village and North Montpelier Village
- Specific zoning regulations for run-off
- Map section – add Geological Survey Bedrock maps for Earth Resources
- Discussion regarding coordinating various needs (Town, schools, FD) & capital planning and budgeting; include as a goal?
- What are we going to do about space for Town Clerk’s records; facilities or capital budget issue?
- Wildlife corridors relative to development (not mapped); Plan does discuss unfragmented forest land

Wrap-up

Deadline for additional comments is October 20th. Next steps: PC will review all comments and revise chapters; assemble a draft with maps and figures; hold public hearing in Jan 2013 and make an necessary revision; submit plan to SB in Feb 2013 and if approved by SB, send to the CVRPC.

Motion to adjourn. Made by Ms. Watson; seconded by Mr. Hess. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Secretary