

*Minutes of the East Montpelier Planning Commission*

**APPROVED 11/1/12**

October 18, 2012

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

Others Present: Bruce Johnson (Zoning Administrator), Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary), Julie Potter, Jen Mojo, Seth Gardner, Carl Etnier

**Call to Order:** 7:00pm

**Public Comment:** None

**Change to Agenda:** Move Review Minutes to first

**Review of Minutes**

September 6, 2012

**Motion: I move to approve as presented.** Made: Vissering, second: Lane

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 8-0

September 20, 2012

**Motion: I move to approve as amended.** Made: Troia, second: Hess

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 8-0

October 4, 2012

**Motion: I move to approve as amended.** Made: Lane, second: Pierce

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 8-0

**CVRPC Enhanced Consultation Review of Preliminary Town Plan** – CVRPC Regional Planner Jen Mojo

Topics Jen is trying to address:

- Approve consistency among town plan's with more in-depth process
- Measure progress from previous plan to current plan
  - Differences from 2008 – no drastic changes; more comprehensive in Village, technology, energy and groundwater
- Under Act 199, state the town's position on large water withdrawal, the State might model language based on EM's Town Plan; Jen will review Bethel's Town Plan regarding bottling; PC would like more information on a definition of 'large withdrawal'; position could be that more research would need to be done on a permit application; provides more leverage in Act 250 hearings

Plan Review:

Strengths:

- Strong land use section
  - CVRPC's housing forecast was done in 2001 and was based on population initially combined with Montpelier; EM population has remained fairly stable for the last 10 years, population hasn't increased as much as forecast
  - Coordination with Land Trust to build affordable housing
  - Incentives for developers
  - Meeting the forecast is not imperative, growth areas have already been identified; include map of designated growth areas; expand on village overlay

Weaknesses:

- Economic development: include unemployment figures, commute times, current employment sectors (Jen can help gather data)
- Many goals missing action verbs: add 'shall' to make goals and actions stronger
  - PC agrees to look at the goals and actions that are most important and word them stronger
- Lacking discussion of air quality; might attract companies that adversely affect air quality
- Include more language regarding what renewables are acceptable; siting/scale and type

Opportunities

- Roads policy is done, needs approval
- No action for EM Center, probably none needed
- Mention work of Energy Committee and weatherization projects
- Include direct language regarding accessory dwellings
- Check with Jens Hilke to do greater natural resource planning and maps; data layers for all towns in VT

Training Needs/Documents

- PC will give Jen a list of data and maps needed; there was a discussion of color for online version versus B&W maps for hardcopy

Training on:

- Changing village zoning: wastewater disposal, fire district, how to balance the two needs
- Capital planning and budgeting: PC didn't get very far last time
- See if DRB has any training needs

**Discussion of Combination Town & Zoning Administrator (ZA) position**

Carl Etnier and Seth Gardner came to the PC to discuss the Interim ZA position. The SB has asked Bruce Johnson to be the Interim ZA and are thinking about offering him the job full-time. If appointed, Mr. Johnson would step down as SB Chair and not run for re-election in March. There are concerns regarding a conflict of interest and Jim Barlow of VLCT has assured the SB there is no conflict. The SB feels that Mr. Johnson is capable and timely and the move will save the town money. Berlin and Hyde Park have used this model for years and have been successful. The SB would like a recommendation from the PC before the SB's 11/19 meeting. The potential problems might include a perception of self-dealing. The PC would like to advertise the position before making a recommendation. The Town Administrator and Zoning Administrator positions will be kept separate. Regarding the ZA writing the DRB decisions, it may have to go back to the DRB members writing the decisions; the ZA would never write decisions on appeals. The PC discussed advertising for two weeks; posters will be put up at the Town Office, Dudley's, Riverbend Store; job will be posted on Front Porch Forum and the SignPost website.

**Motion: I move to advertise for the Zoning Administrator position on FPF and notice at the Town Office, Dudley's and Riverbend stores.** Made: Hess, second: Lane

The job posting will include the statement that applications will be accepted until the position is filled

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 8-0

**Discussion of Planning Commission Stipend**

The stipend (\$500 per member, \$750 for the Chair) was approved at Town Meeting and designated in the budget. The town only pays by direct deposit and each PC member needs to submit a W-4. Individual PC members can elect not to receive the stipend; let the ZA know by the next meeting.

**Discussion on Process/Timeline for Incorporating Comments & Revising Town Plan**

Dave Grundy and Carl Etnier are coming to the 11/1 meeting to discuss the Energy chapter. There was suggestion to have the PC members make the changes to the chapters and then bounce them off the original authors. Incorporating the maps and charts will take time, but has to be completed by 2/1/13. The PC needs to talk about which comments to include and which ones not to.

**Agenda for 11/1 meeting:**

- Agriculture
- Energy
- FY14 budget
- ZA position
- Water Supplies/Groundwater
- Split up document for future meetings; assign someone to make changes

**Agenda for 11/15 meeting:**

- Shall/should discussion
  - Decide what is most important
  - What do we really care about
  - Prioritize goals and actions

**ZA Report**

11 new permits since last meeting

**DRB Report**

Sanfacon issue recessed until after the state site visit

Wong hearing was recessed until he decides what to do

Swenson yurt was approved as a storage facility

Next DRB meeting is 11/20

**Motion to adjourn.** Made by Mr. Santor; seconded by Mr. Lane. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:00p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Secretary*