

November 3, 2016

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

Others Present: Kristi Flynn (Recording Clerk), Phillip Heinz, Richard Brock, Nona Estrin, Mary Stone, Greg Western

**Call to order:** 7:01pm

**Changes to Agenda** – None

**Public Comment** – None

**East Montpelier Village Master Plan: Trails and Recreation Discussion with Nona Estrin & Mary Stone (EM Trails, Inc.), Greg Western (Cross VT Trail Association), and Phillip Heinz (EM Recreation Board)**

The PC met with the trails and recreation boards in town to review how recreation can fit into the Village Master Plan. The group reviewed the draft village boundary. The following issues were discussed:

EM Trails, Inc

- Their mission is to identify and facilitate trails wherever they can; plan to circle through the village
- Provide an organization where owners and users can preserve land for recreation
- Don't develop
- Currently have 12 miles of trails and a potential for 8 more; difficult to maintain
- Cross VT Trails has helped to develop and maintain the trails in town
- Co-hold permanent easements with VLT, VHCB and the town
- Work with Gully Jumpers, Montpelier Mountain Bike, U-32 and Cross VT Trails
- No trails intersect the lower village currently
- Mallory Brook trail – starts at Johnson Road to Cherry Tree Hill
- One trail in the upper village, on an old railroad bed
- Consider building trails where people are already using land to get to established trails
- Future plans:
  - Many projects in the works, often take many years to come to be
  - Will add creating a trail in the lower village to the list of projects
    - Someone needs to get excited and passionate about this in order for it to happen
- Currently fundraising for a bridge to connect Montpelier with Cross VT trail over the Winooski; \$1.5MM raised, \$99k to go

Cross VT Trails

- Mission is to connect villages, schools and natural areas
- Connect upper and lower villages? Consider utilizing the new bridge project and connecting to the new sidewalks
- Goal is to have trails statewide across the width of VT; have 30 miles out of 90 miles done so far
- Make sure new bridge on Route 2 has good bike/pedestrian space; higher criteria than for a snowmobile bridge
- Main focus is coming up Route 2 jumping over to Route 14 by Lylehaven
- Make sure to mention trails in the Town Plan update and make it easier for landowners to gift their land by giving incentives, making subdivisions easier, etc.

EM Recreation Board

- Manage recreation field next to the school
- Moving to non-profit status; paperwork is signed
- Mission is to support recreation activities for all members of the community
- Concentrate on youth sports currently
- Brainstorming new opportunities: cross country club, ice rink
- Facilities include the rec field, dugouts and storage shed, which is being moved and renovated
- Current project – making a new park space with picnic tables in the tree line between the school and rec field
- It would be nice to have trails connect to this area
- Chain link fence between road and parking lot is overgrown with poison ivy and needs to be cleared out
- Would like to have lighting on one of the soccer fields, possibly solar
- Considering a new building with a full-size basketball/volleyball court; would be nice to have this in the village as the EM school gym is hard to get in the winter time
- Working on getting more volunteers

Discussion regarding federal grant money for parks and recreation; transportation versus recreation grants

The PC asked all groups to let them know where they feel the most logical places are to put new trails; show dotted lines for proposed trails. It will be a challenge to connect the upper and lower villages.

Next steps:

- Draft village master plan due by 5/31/17; draft zoning language will also be created
- Consider planning grant money

- Survey townspeople
- Hire planning person to organize and do the survey

**East Montpelier Village Master Plan: Discussion of Next Steps**

Ms. Potter will have a draft schedule available for the next meeting. Mr. Vorwald will be at the next meeting to review all the public forum responses. The PC felt the forum was overall positive and it was great to involve the school and kids. It would be great to get them involved in the Town Plan update. Ms. Potter noted that the PC must agree on boundaries and lot sizes at the next meeting.

**Discussion on Planning Commission's December Schedule**

The PC agreed that they would meet on 12/15 if the discussion on village designation is going to happen. The Chair requested that the PC members review the village documents and maps on the town's website.

**East Montpelier Land Conservation Summit: Review of October 10, 2016 Event and Consideration of Future Discussions and Consideration with Selectboard and Conservation Fund Advisory Committee**

The SB has scheduled a meeting on 11/21 with the SB and the Conservation Fund Advisory Committee, starting between 6:30-7:00pm at their regular meeting. This will be a more focused discussion. The PC needs to know what its role is going forward. Some thoughts:

- Village master plan – housing potential/growth
- Re-examine zoning districts – tweak the purposes
- Gallison Hill growth area
- Closer association with Vermont Land Trust on new projects
- Include a new section on forest integrity in the new Town Plan
- Coordinate with Conservation Fund Advisory Committee on conservation versus development

**Update on East Montpelier Old LaPerle Farm Property Committee**

Stone Environmental has finished the analysis and there is a meeting on 11/10 to review and discuss next steps.

**Review Minutes**

October 20, 2016

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes as presented.** Made: Ms. Potter, second: Mr. Lane

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

**ZA Report**

Nothing new to report

**DRB Report**

Nothing new to report

**Other Business**

- Potential Grant for Energy Planning – this grant is for comprehensive planning for energy projects. The PSB must give deference to a town if they have a plan. The state is looking for 6 towns to volunteer. The PC has two options: 1) volunteer, or 2) wait until the first wave of towns do this to see what happens. The PC agreed that waiting is best as the Village Master Plan must be done during the same timeframe.
- Mr. Hill brought up something he saw in Vermont Picket Fence: Vermod homes, modular homes that are energy-efficient, net-zero homes that are a replacement for trailer homes.

**Motion to Adjourn.** Made: Mr. Hill, second: Mr. Lane. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Clerk*