

November 19, 2015

PC Members Present: Jean Vissering (Chair), Jack Pauly, Kim Watson, Jay Stewart, Julie Potter

Others Present: Bruce Johnson (Town Administrator), Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary), Kate McCarthy

**Call to order:** 7:05pm

**Changes to Agenda** – None

**Public Comment** – None

**Presentation by & Discussion with Kate McCarthy, Sustainable Program Director for the Vermont Natural Resources Council**

The PC and Ms. McCarthy had the following discussions/comments regarding techniques for zoning:

- For all zones, focus on:
  - Purpose
  - Dimensional requirements
  - Standards – general or by zone – should vs. shall, may vs. must
- Techniques to use for 7-acre zone:
  - To preserve forest, include a standard that limits the amount of clearing
    - See pages 43 and 47 in the VNRC handout/book
    - Exception can be made in certain circumstances
  - To preserve open land, similar language can be used
  - Limit length of driveways
    - See page 67 in VNRC handout/book
    - Could be customized by district
    - Town should identify natural resources and include on a map in the zoning regulations; could reference the natural resources map in the Town Plan
  - When economically/topographically feasible, locate house on the most unusable land
  - Siting with sensibility
    - Siting a house near existing development
    - See pages 74-75 for examples
    - Define what you are trying to protect and how to protect it
  - Conditional use review of single family homes
    - Helps to protect natural resources and wildlife and discourages fragmented blocks of land
  - Large landowners are becoming older
    - Change in ownership leads to fragmentation
    - Hold Planning for Land Transfer seminars
  - One-time carve-out to pass along land to families
  - Put an exception in for conservation
    - Let them have a small building lot and conserve more land
  - Separate density from lot size
    - See module 19 at VPIC.info
  - Setback requirements
    - Look at historical setbacks
    - Come up with ranges depending on the area/road
- Subdivisions – more important in rural areas
- Are zones doing what is intended?
  - What has been developed, evaluate a comprehensive historical list
  - Look at average and median lot size in each zone
    - Work with Dan Currier at CVRPC to get the data
  - Talk to farmers and those who use the land
    - Do you have enough land?
    - Where would you like to buy more?
- Topics to discuss next time
  - Developing a growth area
  - Village development – 1 acre lots with septic
  - Strip development
  - Enhanced family/accessory dwellings cluster development
  - PUD – avoid smart growth in dumb places

**Discuss of BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar, LLC's Proposed 500kW Solar Array on the Cassani US Rte 2 Property**

Current/possible proposals in town:

Mekkelsen's – Route 2

LeClair – Towne Hill Road

Cassani – Route 2 in the village

Casella – on land fill, 100 acres

No decision is needed immediately on the Cassani proposal. The filing with PSB may occur around the middle of January. The PC should be a party to the filing and draft a letter with the following concerns:

- Septic possibility in the village
- Growth issues
- Screening
- Transformers hum/noise

The PC will consider an amendment to the Town Plan regarding solar projects.

**Discussion of Central Vermont Community Solar Forum on November 21st, 12:30-4:00**

The forum will take place at the SHAPE Campus Center, VTC, Randolph Center. Ms. Potter will probably attend.

**Review Applications for Planning Commission Vacancy**

There is one application. The PC will re-visit at the next meeting.

**Discussion of PC Attendance at Selectboard Hearing on Proposed Zoning Regulation Amendments Scheduled for November 30th, 7:00 pm at the ESF**

The hearing will be held on 11/30 at 7pm at the fire station. There was some discussion regarding inviting Sascha Pealer and the PC decided to leave the decision up to the Town Administrator. PC members should plan to attend.

**Consideration of SignPost Article Submission for January/February Issue**

The deadline for the article is December 1st. The PC agreed to not submit an article as there is not much to report at this time.

**Review Minutes**

November 5, 2015

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes as amended.** Made: Ms. Watson, second: Mr. Pauly

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

**ZA Report**

2 new permits since last meeting

**DRB Report**

- Nothing new to report
- No meeting in December

**Motion to Adjourn.** Made: Mr. Stewart, second: Ms. Watson. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Clerk*