

March 4, 2021

PC Members Present: Julie Potter (Chair), Zach Sullivan, Clarice Cutler, Scott Hess, Siu Tip Lam, Mark Lane, Gianna Petito, Richard Hall, Kim Watson

Others Present: Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary), Laureen Gauthier, Chuck Hertz, Ron Koss

**Call to Order:** 7:03pm

**Roll Call Attendance**

The Chair took roll call attendance; the PC members noted above were present.

**Statement Regarding Remote Public Meeting**

The Chair noted that as a public body, the PC must still follow open meeting laws. Vermont is allowing remote meeting. The Chair read the recommended statement from VLCT regarding meeting remotely.

**Changes to Agenda:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Welcome to Newly-Elected Commissioners**

The Chair welcomed Richard Hall and Gianna Petito, who introduced themselves. The Chair thanked the retiring PC members.

**Motion: I move to recognize Paul Eley for his service on the Planning Commission and express our thanks for help in planning for the town's future.** Made: Ms. Potter, second: Ms. Watson

**Vote on Motion:** Passed unanimously

**Motion: I move to recognize Jack Pauly for his 18 years of service on the Planning Commission and express our thanks for his help in planning for the town's future.** Made: Ms. Potter, second: Mr. Hess

**Vote on Motion:** Passed unanimously

**Discussion Cell Tower and Scenic Resources Updates to Town Plan**

The Chair thanked Mr. Hess, Ms. Petito, Mr. Smith and Ms. Lam for helping to review town plans. The PC discussed possible models and capturing key concepts. The Chair suggested looking at Calais, Fayston, Hyde Park and Stowe's town plans. Mr. Hess noted that there is not a lot of guidance available and no template's to use. State statute does not say that telecommunication needs to be included in town plans. It was noted that the zoning regulations were written to try to limit cell towers in scenic areas but this needs to be reviewed. Many towns made passing mention of telecommunications. The PUC must look at the Town Plan but not necessarily the regulations; the PC should strengthen the language in the Town Plan and point more to the regulations. Ms. Watson noted a WEC article that speaks to the need to balance development of internet and telecom. No town plans were clear on how to encourage telecom; some towns were promoting it and were more open to infrastructure. There are many aesthetic concerns and co-location comes up a lot; come up with locations that would be good such as on the top of taller structures, promoting transmitters instead of towers. For renewable energy projects, the town must have an Energy Plan with preferred siting areas. The PC discussed looking at Fairfax and Thetford's plans as a template for siting towers on town property and collecting revenue to lower taxes. Ms. Cutler wondered what happened to the Conservation Commission and whether they could help with this process. The Commission was approved at last Town Meeting but when the pandemic started, the SB delayed the establishment, though they were mainly set up to help with land conservation, such as trails. They could possibly help with natural resource inventory. The PC also discussed the language in the regulations dealing with a deposit towards a technical assessment; was this in any other town plans? Ms. Petito noted that Fayston talked about an alternative site assessment.

The Chair noted that the PC's policy is to participate in Section 248 reviews to make sure the town's interests are represented. The Town Plan is often aspirational; it needs to be more specific if meant to be used in a regulatory context. The PC needs to come up with a decommissioning policy for end-of-life. Mr. Koss stated that the Horn of the Moon residents are not necessarily a 'not in my backyard' neighborhood; they do care about telecom infrastructure and hope that this issue will help the PC strengthen the Town Plan. Next steps:

- Excerpt language from other town plans
- Review what is in our Town Plan to more fully understand what is included
- Dan Smith will continue to research the Quechee Analysis, which relates to undue visual impact and how to review aesthetics
- Draft language for Town Plan to review

Ms. Gauthier stated that she understands that cell coverage is necessary and would like the PC to identify areas where cell towers are not desired. Look at Jericho, where low height limits are considered. Mr. Hertz likes the direction that the PC is taking and feels regulations are comprehensive but need stronger links to the Town Plan. Mr. Koss reminded the PC to consider health-related issues, including distance to residences, possibly incorporate some guidance. The Chair didn't see this issue mentioned in any other town plans.

### Discuss Village Zoning

The PC reviewed the village zoning discussed thus far for the new commissioners. There was discussion of the Brown parcel (#17) on Quaker Road. The landowners intend to build a structure for their business farther back on the property; the PC decided at the last meeting to draw the line straight across the property and now need to decide how far back to draw the line. The PC agreed to ask the ZA to check with the Browns to see if 400' back from Quaker Road works for them before moving ahead. For the Village Residential boundary, the PC discussed some parcels along Kelton Road to Route 14. Currently, the boundary line runs along a stream; does the PC prefer a straight line instead? It could cause problems and confusion if the stream meanders. The parcels affected are already split between two zones. Mr. Sullivan noted that the boundary could be the stream as mapped on the River Corridor map for clarity. The PC could consider using the same line as mapped between current zones.

Preference poll: straight line – 5, undecided – 1, use existing boundary – 3

Next steps:

- Mobile home parks
- Adjustments to parking requirements
- Revisions to PUD/PRD language

### Review Schedule for Rules of Procedure and PC Organization

The Chair stated that this is generally done in the first meeting in April. There will be a need to elect a new Chair, as Ms. Potter is stepping down as Chair this year. If interested in a position, check with the Chair on the roles of the officers.

### Updates

- Capital Improvement Committee – done until June when they will start the process all over again
- Energy Committee – no update, Mr. Hess will reach out to Judith Dillon on SB
- Resilient Roads Committee – Mr. Lane reported that the committee is looking at grants to plant trees in town, possibly in cemeteries; they will consider where ash trees were removed, as well; there are marked ash trees along County Road that will be removed this summer
- Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission – the next meeting will be with the Vermont Urban & Forest council regarding town forest recreation planning; let the Chair know if interested in being the town representative to the CVRPC

### ZA Report

- No update

### DRB Report

- No update

### Review Minutes

February 18, 2021

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes as amended.** Made: Mr. Sullivan, second: Mr. Hess

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 9-0

### Training/Education

UVM Town Officer Education – April 12, 13, 15; free training, waiting for more information

### Other Business

- The Chair reported that she is retiring from the CVRPC this Spring; the SB appoints this town representative, so the PC should put the word out to those interested; if interested, send a letter of interest to the SB through the ZA
- New commissioners should request hard copies of the Town Plan, zoning regulations and Village Master Plan from the ZA to make reading the documents easier

**Motion to Adjourn.** Made: Mr. Hess, second: Mr. Lane. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:10p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Secretary*