

April 15, 2021

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

Others Present: Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary), Michael Dennis, Laureen Gauthier, Kate Ruddle, Ron Koss

Call to Order: 7:04pm

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

Review rbTech Net-Metered Solar Array Application

The Chair completed the intervener form as requested. It is ready to be filed if the PC decides that is the way they want to go. The PC reviewed the draft letter to the PUC. The statute references the town's bylaws but the town doesn't generally have too much authority. The town has more authority over screening though our regulations don't specifically mention landscaping. Regarding possible conditions:

- Make sure to state we agree with screening to the north as well as wanting some screening on the south
- Future owners maintain plantings and follow decommissioning plan; decommissioning will probably look very different in 30 years
 - Leave specific decommissioning plan up to the PUC

On page two, there was a suggestion to change the order of 1 & 2. The PC discussed the member's feeling on requiring plantings on the south. Ms. Potter would like low shrubs close to the panels for visual appeal, not to hide the panels totally. Mr. Hess is not sure how screening would work without blocking the panels. Ms. Petito would like to request that the plantings are native species. The Chair doesn't feel strongly about screening since there is an industrial building and it fits in with the scale.

Preference poll on requesting south screening: yes – 2, no – 5

Ms. Potter noted that the PC is not opposing the project but it is good to show that the PC speaks up on these types of projects. The PC discussed an informal request of south screening.

Preference poll on requesting maintenance: yes – 7, no – 0

The PC agreed to add 'native species' to #1, and note that any replacement planting shall be native species.

Motion: I move to file the edited letter. Made: Ms. Potter, second: Mr. Hall

Vote on Motion: Passed 7-0

The PC discussed whether to file as an intervener or file public comment. Ms. Potter noted that there is no downside to being an intervener as the PUC must keep us informed.

Motion: I move to file as intervener. Made: Ms. Petito, second: Ms. Cutler

Discussion: Mr. Hall was concerned of the perception of being an intervener as being too aggressive; Ms. Potter noted that the PC is simply asking to continue participating in the project. The Chair also shares the concern of aggression; Ms. Lam stated that the PC can intervene as a supporter of the project.

Vote on Motion: Passed 6-1 (Hall)

Discuss Village Zoning

The PC reviewed draft parking standards in Section 3.11, version 2/24/21. They include minimum and maximum standards. Dirt lots are part of the dimensional standards: minimum of 9' width, 18' length. Table 3.1 includes the minimums; the maximums are twice the values listed in the table. The PC agrees to move forward with draft Section 3.11.

Discussion Cell Tower and Scenic Resources Updates to Town Plan

The PC reviewed the draft section; it mirrors the Energy section (version 4/11/21). The Chair plans to have the section reviewed for accuracy. Regarding the cell siting standards and resources to be protected, the PC and residents had the following comments:

- For trails, include VAST and other trails
- Be careful of the word 'foreground'
- Forested areas – concerned with the language regarding 'balloon test'; it would be better to be able to use other photos beyond the test; the Chair noted that the draft doesn't specify whose photos will be used; expand the language that it's not reliant on applicant photos. Residents asked that it not be reliant on the balloon test.
- The balloon that is used is small, doesn't necessary represent the impact of a cell tower; use Jacobs Road as an example of siting

- Health and safety and property values are most important to residents; they are concerned that this is not part of the process at all. Mr. Koss acknowledged that the PC cannot regulate this issue and stated that the PC could work around this by setting a large setback and not saying why it was setting that requirement.
- Can setbacks be mentioned as part of the section? Setbacks apply to all uses and structures
- Make sure to call out higher density residential area as not suitable
- Foreground refers to up to ½ mile
- A cell tower is unique and the regulations should be unique to deal with it, as it is taller than most structures in town
- Aesthetics are mainly based on road views, but trails should also be considered; scenic resources seen from public areas
- Look at Class 3 & 4 mapped trails; it would be great to repeat the foreground language here
- Define forested area better
- Make sure to protect streams and ponds, possibly need stronger language
- By referencing and putting regulations in the Town Plan, it gives them more weight
- The Natural Resources Protection section from the Energy section should be included in this section
- The diagram in the draft is too vague, should be more specific, if possible
- The plan needs to be flexible enough to deal with multiple projects
- Need Goals, Policies and Action – send any ideas to the Chair
- Link foreground and scenic resources

The Chair will revise and bring a new draft to the next meeting.

Updates

- Capital Improvement Committee – there is an opening on the committee; discussion of how many PC members should be on the committee, currently there is one; the SB is discussing this at their 4/19 meeting at 6:45pm
- Energy Committee – no update
- Resilient Roads Committee – no update
- Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission – Ken Jones of the Office of Economic Development attended the last meeting; the department is working with RPC's on regional economic development plans; there is lots of money coming into the state to help small businesses, possibly broadband and cellular communication; could our sewer project be the type of project funded? Ms. Cutler noted that the SB in Montgomery is a test case for a small town sewer system

ZA Report

- Twelve new permits

DRB Report

- PUD conversation was delayed
- Change of use to market/restaurant approved
- Sketch plan reviewed – McCoy/Gibson subdivision on Bliss Road

Review Minutes

April 1, 2021

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

Vote on Motion: Passed 7-0

Motion to Adjourn. Made: Ms. Lam, second: Ms. Cutler. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:55p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Secretary