

February 3, 2022

PC Members Present: Zach Sullivan (Chair), Julie Potter, Richard Hall, Scott Hess, Clarice Cutler, Mark Lane, Kim Watson, Spencer Hardy

Others Present: Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary)

Call to Order: 7:02pm

Statement regarding remote meetings

Changes to Agenda: None

Public Comment: None

Discuss Logistics for Zoning Hearing

The Chair will put another notice on Front Porch Forum. The hearing will probably be all remote. Ms. Potter will give a presentation and the rest of the hearing will be for public comment. The Chair will run the technical side of the hearing. The residents from Jacobs Road have not been heard from, but some people from Center Road have made some comments. PC members will monitor the chat comments. The Chair suggested having a Google doc open to take down the public comments as a form of a white board. It would be good to remind people about remote meeting protocols, particularly using the hand reaction in order to be called upon. Ask people to put their names on their Zoom screen to put faces to names. Ms. Cutler volunteered to be phone tech support for participants.

Discuss Energy Plan

The Chair thanked all the PC members who took the time to look at the plan. It appears that we already have quite a bit that covers what it needs to. There was some discussion about having it as a stand-alone plan or integrated into the Town Plan. Ms. Cutler believes having the plan integrated into the TP makes more sense; it is easier to deal with a single document. Mr. Hess and Ms. Watson noted that the Town Plan has quite a bit on Transportation and other topics. Ms. Potter noted that there is enough in the Town Plan with cross references that the Energy section could just be expanded upon. There will need to be some changes and additions. Renewable energy, including solar, will be an important piece of the update; could note the data used is older. The PC is interested in looking at new ideas, such as the topic of methane. Consider asking the CVRPC to provide needed data. Ms. Watson noted that a census has been done since the last update of the Town Plan. Updated data is needed when a complete new Town Plan is updated. 2018 Town Plan needs to be completely updated in 2026, but the PC is working on two amendments before then. The PC did a major update for 2018, so could plan to do a minor update for 2026. Ms. Potter noted that the PC should consider a town survey for this plan; the last survey was done in 2011. This could help with the vision for the town. The Chair noted that the current plan is to amend the TP for the cell tower changes and then do another amendment regarding the Energy Plan. Would it be better to wait and do just one amendment? Ms. Potter believes it will be easier to keep the topics separate. Other members agree that the PC should move forward with the cell tower amendment. It was suggested that the PC review Northfield's Energy Plan; it is about six pages and easy to digest. It is voluntary to have an Energy Plan in the Town Plan, but if towns want any say in renewable energy plans, they must have a more robust and approved Energy Plan. There was some discussion regarding methane capture projects that could be used to generate electricity. The Chair sees that having this topic might be useful to have in the Energy Plan; it is something worth exploring. Maybe the Town Plan can help with this type of vision.

Next steps are to review the Northfield Energy Plan and look at the provided checklist to see if there are items to add. The Chair can provide additional links to other Town Plans if anyone is interested.

Discuss Materials for Town Plan Amendment Hearing

Some minor changes were suggested to the materials. The Chair will insert page numbers and a heading across the top of each page for clarity. Minor changes were made to the Executive Summary; Ms. Potter suggested clearing up some language regarding the Town Plan. The Chair will add 'Amended' to the references to the 2018 Town Plan. Ms. Potter suggested bringing the full document with changes to the first meeting in April to give new PC members a chance to review before the public hearing.

Updates

- Capital Improvement Committee –no update
- Energy Committee – no update
- Resilient Roads Committee – no update
- Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission – no update
- Town Plan Amendments – no update

ZA Report

- One new permit

DRB Report

- No update

Review Minutes

January 20, 2022

Motion: I move to approve the minutes as written. Made: Mr. Hess; second: Mr. Lane

Vote on Motion: Passed 8-0

Other Business

- Election – Kim, Spencer and Zach are on the ballot. If anyone knows candidates who might be interested in running a write-in campaign they should be encouraged to do that. If anyone knows of anyone who might be interested, encourage them to put their name out there. The SB will have to appoint someone so that may be an avenue to get on the PC.
- ZA has talked about retiring by summer 2023 and there may be some additional turnover at the Town Office. The SB is looking at separating the Town Administrator and Zoning Administrator roles. The Assistant Town Clerk is also retiring this year.

Motion to Adjourn. Made: Mr. Hess, second: Mr. Lane. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:38p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Secretary