

## *Minutes of the East Montpelier Planning Commission*

***Approved 10/20/22***

October 6, 2022

PC Members Present: Zach Sullivan (Chair), Scott Hess, Kim Watson, Gianna Petito (via zoom), Richard Hall, Mark Lane (via zoom)

Others Present: Deirdre Connelly

**Call to Order:** 7:02 pm

**Changes to Agenda:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

### **Review Minutes**

The group reviewed the September 15, 2022 minutes and made an edit for clarity.

**Motion: To approve the September 15, 2022 minutes with tonight's edit.** Made by Mr. Hess, second by Mr. Hall. Passed unanimously.

### **Review comments re: recently approved zoning updates**

The group reviewed the email suggesting edits to the recently approved zoning regulations. The typos identified in sections 4, 5, and 6 appear to be minor fixes that could easily be updated. Ms. Watson thought the typos could be fixed without making a log of the changes. Mr. Sullivan will look into whether it is possible to simply make the changes without going through the formal amendment process.

The suggested edits and questions about section 9 were more complex. Ms. Watson thought Mr. Cueto was asking for an interpretation of sections 9.4 and 9.5. Mr. Sullivan noted that the email also suggested edits to both sections. He thought that if the PC attempted to make edits to the flood regulations, they would be opening up a more complex editing process involving the CVPRC and requiring state approvals.

Ms. Petito suggested the group could think about addressing the flood regulations after their work on the energy plan. Mr. Sullivan noted that Ms. Oates has experience with emergency management and might be able to help the group understand how complex the updates might be.

Mr. Sullivan will follow up with Mr. Cueto as to whether he was seeking interpretation or requesting edits to the regulations. He will also check with Ms. Oates and with Keith Cubbon from CVPRC to get a better sense of how complex the project of editing the flood regulations might be.

### **Discussion of Energy Plan work plan, set milestones and tasks for energy work**

Mr. Sullivan talked through the checklist he'd drafted for completing the energy plan:

Complete analysis (Section 5A-D)

- Get data and targets from CVRPC regional plan
- Convert data to common unit of measure (BTUs or kWhs)
- Write narrative around analysis

Complete Pathways 6-8

- Evaluate standards in existing town plan (Done)
- Determine additional goals or actions (do in conjunction with energy committee and/or with public input)
- Complete section text (In process)

Complete generation assessment

- Update current generation capabilities (9a)
- Get generation potential from CVRPC (9b)
- Check and potentially update preferred and restricted siting language (9d) – current town plan already contains this
- Work with CVRPC to add preferred and restricted areas to maps and calculate available land for renewable energy development (9c)

Mr. Hall asked when they expected to get the data from CVRPC. Mr. Sullivan noted that they'd expected to receive the data in August.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the equity component was a new piece that the group needed to address. Ms. Petito suggested adding it to the work list and suggested that they approach it as a dialogue about the benefits and drawbacks of the various solutions they include in the plan. Mr. Sullivan agreed and suggested the group plan to work through the equity piece in more detail at a future meeting.

The group discussed recruiting members for the energy committee and inviting public comment on the energy plan. Ms. Watson felt that, moving forward, continued work on the energy plan and public outreach should happen in parallel. Ms. Watson and Mr. Hess thought it would be easier to recruit new members to the existing energy committee rather than disband it and form a new one. Ms. Petito pointed out that there was some confusing messaging around the PC recruiting members for an existing energy committee. Mr. Sullivan noted that the key problem with the existing energy committee is a lack of a chair to schedule and lead meetings and push the group's work forward.

**Discussion of Energy Plan public engagement**

Mr. Sullivan asked the group if they felt they needed more time to work on the energy plan before presenting their draft to the public. Mr. Hall wondered if they should have the data from CVRPC before publicly presenting it. Mr. Hess felt that the data wouldn't sway someone one way or another to join the energy committee.

The group discussed what was needed to prepare for a public forum. Mr. Hardy had offered to work on a blurb for Front Porch Forum once he had some free time in his schedule; Mr. Sullivan will follow up with him on that. Ms. Petito has the draft slides for the presentation. Ms. Petito suggested divvying up the list of contacts among committee members to do some outreach before the forum.

**Updates**

- **Capital Improvement Committee-** The committee met and discussed preliminary steps toward a new town garage, as well as the sidewalk shortfall and looking ahead to future expected repairs. They will next be meeting in November.
- **Energy Committee-** no update

- **Resilient Roads Committee-** The Emerald Ash Borer is present in the town and the committee visited a few dying black ash trees to see their path. The group is meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> to talk about next steps.
- **Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission-** no update

**ZA Report**

None.

**DRB Report**

The October meeting was cancelled.

**Other Business**

The cemetery committee met and is looking for new sexton.

**Motion: To adjourn.** Made by Mr. Hess, second by Ms. Watson. Passed unanimously.

Meeting closed at 8:45 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Deirdre Connelly.*