

## *Minutes of the East Montpelier Planning Commission*

***Approved 6/15/23***

June 1, 2023

PC Members Present: Zach Sullivan (Chair), Maia Stone, Nik Khosla, Richard Hall, Gianna Petito (zoom), Clarice Cutler, Kim Watson, Mark Lane (zoom)

Others Present: Deirdre Connelly

**Call to Order:** 7:06 pm

**Changes to Agenda:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

### **Review Minutes**

The group reviewed the May 18, 2023 minutes and made a few edits for clarity.

**Motion: To approve the May 18, 2023 minutes with tonight's amendments.** Made by Ms. Cutler, second by Ms. Petito. Passed unanimously.

### **Discuss Land Use Section of Town Plan to update to meet Energy Plan Requirements**

Mr. Sullivan explained that he wanted the PC to review the Land Use section of the Town Plan to check for areas that needed to be updated in relation to the Energy Plan. He had sent out a version with a few of his own comments and flags prior to the meeting. He also confirmed that the Energy committee is planning to work on an integrated Energy Plan. Mr. Sullivan noted that the two priorities to cover in this section of the Town Plan, with regards to the Energy Plan, are encouraging compact development and reducing sprawl.

The group reviewed the Land Use section of the Town Plan:

- Ms. Stone asked why Sandy Pines is not considered a hamlet. Mr. Sullivan explained that it is considered part of the designated village area. Ms. Cutler noted that North Montpelier received designation and should not be described as a hamlet in the Town Plan anymore
- Page 138: Mr. Sullivan noted that the list of focal points at the top of the page should be updated with businesses like Fox Market and Route 2 Auto
- Page 138: Mr. Sullivan noted the updated zoning should be integrated on this page
- Page 138: Ms. Cutler noted that this page should be updated to reflect the completed sidewalks
- Page 139: Ms. Petito asked if the Town Plan was accurate in stating that no studies were conducted for the Gallison Hill area; Ms. Watson explained that it was correct
- Page 140: Ms. Stone pointed out on the fourth paragraph down that the issue of poorly planned subdivisions is mentioned and may be relevant to the Energy Plan; Ms. Cutler noted that the PUD regulations were updated and should be reflected on this page; Ms. Watson added that the setbacks were also updated; Ms. Cutler mentioned that parking requirements in the village were also updated
- Page 141: The PC discussed the mention of strip development in the Town Plan. Mr. Hall pointed out that the text seems to shine a bad light on the existing businesses along Route 2 and suggested the language be changed to be less negative. Ms. Watson explained that the language on strip development is intended to guide future planning and development and the Route 2 mentions are included to offer examples. Ms. Petito added that the purpose of the Town Plan is to articulate a

vision that can be enforced by zoning. Mr. Sullivan suggested the section could be edited to state that no one business is at fault

- Page 141: Mr. Sullivan suggested the section on forest integrity is relevant to the Energy Plan; Ms. Cutler noted that this section of the Town Plan is difficult to enforce
- Page 142: Mr. Sullivan noted the zoning districts need a full update on this page
- Page 144: Mr. Sullivan pointed out the siting section and his comment in the document
- Page 144: Ms. Watson noted that the goals should be revised to reflect completed projects

#### **Discuss Recruitment for Acting Zoning Administrator**

Mr. Sullivan explained that Town Administrator Jenkins emailed him again about recruiting for this position. He asked if anyone in the group was interested or knew of someone who is interested in the position. He added that Mr. McCall from the Energy committee has expressed some interest. Ms. Cutler suggested bringing it up at the upcoming DRB meeting on Tuesday 6/6.

#### **Discuss Issues with Hybrid Meetings (Lessons learned from Green Mountain School District)**

Mr. Sullivan gave some background on a meeting down in Chester and explained that an issue came up with a vote when a member who was attending the meeting via zoom didn't fully hear or understand the motion they voted on. He explained that he was bringing this up to remind PC members to speak up and be proactive if audio doesn't come through via zoom. Ms. Watson added that PC members can always ask the minutes-taker to read back motions before a vote.

#### **Discuss Summer Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Sullivan asked if the PC members are interested in taking the month of August off. The present members supported this break.

#### **Updates**

- **Capital Improvement Committee-** None.
- **Energy Committee-** Mr. Sullivan reported that the Energy committee is planning to go ahead with an integrated Energy Plan.
- **Resilient Roads Committee-** None.
- **Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission-** None.

#### **ZA Report**

The PC reviewed the latest ZA Report. There was no discussion.

#### **DRB Report**

The next DRB meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 6/6.

#### **Other Business**

None.

**Motion: To adjourn.** Made by Ms. Cutler, second by Mr. Lane. Passed unanimously.

Meeting closed at 8:23 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Deirdre Connelly*