

Minutes of the East Montpelier Planning Commission - Final

January 18, 2024

PC Members Present: Zach Sullivan (Chair), Nic Khosla, Richard Hall, Erica Zimmerman (zoom), Clarice Cutler (zoom), Kim Watson (zoom), Gianna Petito (zoom)

PC Members Absent: Mark Lane, Maia Stone

Call to Order: 7:05pm

Changes to Agenda: None

Public Comment: None.

Review Minutes

The group reviewed the January 4, 2024 minutes.

Motion: To approve the January 4, 2024, minutes as amended. Made by Clarice Cutler, second by Gianna Petito. Passed unanimously.

Discuss Next Steps on Public Engagement Exercise

Mr. Sullivan presented the results from the brainstorming exercise from the last meeting (attached). The commission initially talked about putting the themes out for voting, and we did talk about that a little while we were doing the categorization work, and a few people thought that for what we're doing here we don't necessarily want to cut this down to a small number of things right now. We also discussed how we want to use this data for a future forum or survey at this point it's data for us to use, and we may decide that we want to include a lot of the themes/items in the survey, but may also want to ultimately do a prioritization exercise to focus on some of the areas in more depth (i.e. in some sort of in-person public engagement event/forum where we need to focus down to a smaller number of things). The forum or engagement will help us prioritize citizen's interests in the town.

Ms. Zimmerman and Ms. Petito thought that after much discussion, that we need to think about how to use the data for editing the Town Plan's Goals and Actions, and that we may want to have the Housing component as its own meeting. We want to leave open all options to gather data and allow people to express their concerns.

Mr. Hall suggested that we lead with the survey to gather data and concerns. Mr. Sullivan took a straw poll, and everyone agreed that we should begin with a survey to gather interests for actions relating to the Town Plan and Zoning. This will allow citizens to get their voices heard. The survey can also be used as an educational tool for prioritizing themes and topics. Ms. Zimmerman volunteered to look at themes and topics/items to generate a draft survey for review by the commission. Ms. Petito and Ms. Watson agreed to meet with Ms. Zimmerman and help with the draft survey.

Discuss Next Steps on Housing Study

We briefly discussed a possible housing task force and thought it best to table the rest of the discussion until the next meeting. The data derived from a survey will help educate the PC on additional housing needs.

Updates

- **Capital Improvement Committee** – No new updates.
- **Energy Committee** - No new updates.
- **Resilient Roads Committee** – No new updates
- **Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission** - Clarice Cutler reported that it was an excellent meeting covering the following topics; Clean Water Service Provider Presentation, Act 250 updates and the CVRPC did not discuss their position and last topics were Flood Recovery & Mitigation Priorities. Minutes are available on the CVRPC website.

ZA/DRB Report

1 permit approval for a shed. No DRB report

Other Business

We discussed the openings on the PC for commissioners and the potential for other vacancies after the elections in March. Ms. Cutler suggested that we put the upcoming vacancies on the PC on the town website after the March elections. The openings for the PC are listed on the EM website along with openings on all boards. <https://eastmontpeliervt.org/running-for-local-elected-office/>. Mr. Sullivan highly suggested that commissioner's network with any interested citizens who might be interested in serving on the PC push for a write-in campaign on election day.

Motion: To adjourn. Made by Kim Watson, second by Gianna Petito. Passed unanimously.

The meeting closed at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Watson

Approved on: February 1, 2024