

Minutes of the East Montpelier Planning Commission – Draft

August 1, 2024

PC Members Present: Zach Sullivan (Chair), Glenn Weyant, Erica Zimmerman, Ben McCall, Zoe Christiansen

Other Attendees:

Eli Toohey (CVRPC)
Christian Meyer (CVRPC)
Will Pitkin (CVRPC)

Call to Order: 7:01 PM

Changes to Agenda: None

Public Comment: None

Discuss Regional Housing Targets with CVRPC

CVRPC will use 2011 and 2020 census data to update the CVRPC Regional Plan and will extend to 2030 to get the new targets for housing data. How many housing units will be needed? 971 units were predicted. Destruction rates using decay or fire will also be looked at as well. Homeless was not included. Targets are predicted to show what the towns should be planning for.

Zoe Christiansen was concerned with the models that were used and furthered the discussion for affordable housing. How do we get realistic numbers when we are not showing vacancy rates and homeless concerns? We must also look at incomes to attract growth in the area. We need to define what type of housing we are looking at. Housing targets lack definition. Affordable housing will not be possible unless we fix infrastructure. Therefore, it is helpful to ask what the additional housing is going to look like.

EM is a rural community and affordable housing is hard to define and develop. Within the town plan we need to look at specific language: to increase affordable housing, for example we need partnerships with Downstreet. Update zoning regulations to support opportunities to increase housing and density. Look at opportunities in North Montpelier. Plan for affordable housing and look at longevity for additional housing units and additional zones.

Towns can pursue higher density housing based on new maps for the area. CVRPC looks at housing in a regional area. A mobile home park can be a way to affordable housing. Housing needs assessments can be provided from CVRPC. Planning should incorporate what the community needs are using both housing needs and employment needs. Can there be areas in EM that can get on to Montpelier's infrastructure since they are only at 50% capacity? Funding options must be looked at for the area and for EM. Community needs assessments are helpful to define what the needs are for an area and possible solutions. CVRPC can send along what an assessment looks like.

Glenn Weyant had a question on the loss of housing due to various issues such as climate change and flooding. We do not have data yet about that to date. They are having a tough time correlating losses and risk. The State may be able to provide that data.

Short term rentals and ARBNB are difficult to regulate and determine in the your area. The State in general is concerned with the increases in vacant second homes, taxes etc. Housing sizes can be restricted in some areas. Zach Sullivan did not think that EM had restrictions on tiny homes.

CVRPC Rep Appointment Discussion and possible recommendation

Zoe Christian stepped up to be the Representative from EM to the CVRPC.

Motion: I move to recommend the appointment of Zoe Christiansen to represent EM to the CVRPC to the Selectboard. The motion was Made by Erica Zimmerman, second by Glenn Weyant. Passed unanimously. Zach Sullivan will let the SB know of the recommendation.

Review Minutes from June 6 and June 24, 2024

The group reviewed June 6, 2024 minutes and June 24, 2024 minutes.

Motion: To approve the June 6, 2024 minutes and June 24, 2024 minutes as amended. Made by Zoe Christiansen, second by Zach Sullivan. Passed unanimously.

Updates

- **Capital Improvement Committee** – none
- **Energy Committee (EC)** – Looking at grant applications but nothing planning related. Andy Shapiro from the EC has been working with SB on the Town Garage.
- **Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission** – recommendation for new Rep this evening.
- **PC Vacancy** – no applicant at this point. Zach will reach out to anyone interested.

ZA/DRB Report – Meeting scheduled for August 6, 2024 Fairmont Subdivision. New zoning administrator hired and Ben no longer acting ZA. New ZA will attend PC meetings.

Other Business – none

Motion: To adjourn. Made by Zoe Christiansen, second by Glenn Weyant. Passed unanimously.

The meeting closed at 8:38PM

Respectfully submitted by Kim Watson

Approved on: