

WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION
Approved Minutes
Monday, August 28, 2017

Planning Commission: Ken Belliveau, Chair; Rebecca Washburn; Mary Koen; Eric Gross; Mark Ray

Staff: Steve Lotspeich, Community Planner; Judi Byron, Secretary

Public: Madeline Hughes, Waterbury Record; Alyssa Johnson, Economic Development Director; Jeffrey Larkin, Waterbury Economic Development Committee

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:02 at the Municipal Center at 28 N. Main Street.

AGENDA REVIEW AND MODIFICATIONS

Steve brought up the request from Barb Farr and the Waterbury Historical Society to consider submitting a Municipal Planning Grant application. Ken suggested that this be brought up during Other Planning Commission Business.

COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC

No comments were reviewed.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 7TH

MOTION: Mary moved and Becca seconded the approval of minutes for August 7, 2017 as drafted.

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING GRANT PROJECT FOR RE-WRITE OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS

The draft Table of Contents for the Waterbury Unified Development regulations was passed out by Steve. The Bylaws were grouped by consultant Brandy Saxton of Place Sense. Steve and Dina will compare the TOC with the document and make sure everything is cross referenced. Steve asked if this was the direction the PC wanted to go with this basic structure- to look at what we have, and decide if we want to add or delete. Steve mentioned the Home Occupations as an example of clarification- add home industry, home office etc.

Regarding the Table of Contents: though there was discussion of using three vs. four digit numbers comparing that to using decimals between the 3rd and 4th digit, Steve explained the four digit numbers allow for more than 10 subsections in a chapter. For example: Chapters 1, 2, 3, etc., Sections: 110, 120 etc., Subsections 1001, 1002, etc. He pointed to the ease in finding the information that way versus punctuation. Ken stated that the TOC was as good as it gets and simply provides the framework of the document. It was agreed to move on to the body of the document. Mary suggested going through each section and all agreed they needed more time to review the document.

Steve rolled out the zoning district maps to show the group what exists today and also to provide a bit of history of how we got here. In looking at the various zoning districts can we combine and simplify the system of uses? Steve explained that when Town zoning came into being in the 80's, there were three districts in Waterbury Center. In the 90's in order to try to control strip development, there was an attempt to split it up which didn't fly, so we went with a design approach, requiring cluster development. The Town has one area of the Industrial District extending from Parro's Gun Shop to Little River Road. Along U.S. Route 2 to the west of Little River Rd., the area changes to Medium Density Zoning District with a minimum lot of two areas and a number of non-conforming uses. Regarding the event field on the Farr property, as we add more events such as the Antique Car Show, the uses doesn't fit with our "temporary use" bylaw and needs to be addressed.

The Zoning Districts in the Village of Waterbury are different. The Village is served by wastewater so there is a greater opportunity for density and future development. There was talk of mixed use, historic structures, commercial, multi family, mixed residential, mixed business etc. It is a complicated set of zoning maps and includes two different sets of zoning districts for the most part. It was agreed to compare the Town and Village Zoning districts and see if some of them can be combined into the same district.

Regarding the Downtown Design Review Overlay District, Mary suggested separating the two sub-districts, historic/commercial and mixed use in the Table of Contents. Ken agreed with Mary's point; if there was more than one district, it could be listed in a way that people could find the sub-districts more easily. Steve explained that the sub-districts are separately listed in the text and zoning maps.

Regarding the purposes for the zoning districts, those can be added into the sub-sections that Brandy has broken down in the Table of contents. Each purpose would go with that district. The Planning Commission needs to decide what the content is for the sub-section for each district. Each of the zoning districts will have information displayed in a similar fashion. Some district descriptions can include supplemental review standards for that particular. If you want to see all the essential information on one page, a place will be created for that. Ken suggested that Brandy and Steve put something together a draft for the Planning Commission to review and specified a template for consistency and accommodating ease of access to the information.

Alyssa Johnson suggested cross referencing the districts with which ones include certain overlay districts. Jeff Larkin expressed concern with the complexity of the 16 districts and 4 overlay districts. He would like to see certain districts consolidated. Ken suggested combining some districts to reduce the overall number of them.

There was discussion about the Village dissolving and the ramifications. Ken asked when the re-write project was due to wrap up and Steve answered by the end of 2017, though Brandy's contract could be extended. The contract with Brandy ends on January 31, 2018 and can be extended to May 31, 2018 when the grant period ends. The time frame of a public meeting and public opinion survey and the importance of Brandy being there was discussed. Dates TBD. Brandy will come to the next PC meeting, September 11th, where the focus will be planning the public survey and the public meeting.

DRAFT UPDATE TO THE WATERBURY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

There was concern that the Planning Commission is mentioned in many areas and whether they have responsibility for all these projects. There was concern both with the number of projects the Planning Commission was responsible for, as well as the time frame identified in the Plan. Steve explained that the projects identified in the Plan are basically a laundry list. If you wanted a project funded by FEMA, it has to be listed in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. This current plan was approved in 2013-14 and identified a list of what projects could get done with a high, medium or low priority. By the end of 2017, there needs to be a draft to be presented to the two boards. The deadline for submitting the plan to the state is early 2018, after which it goes to FEMA for their review and approval.

Steve's main takeaway was to focus on the tasks that are doable, and then tackle those that can be done in the next five years. Steve reassured the PC that many of the items may not have to involve or name the Planning Commission, except for regulatory instances, and that Barb can rework the language.

LOCAL ENERGY PLAN UPDATE

Steve questioned whether the Planning Commission needed to focus on the Energy Plan at this time, due to the Zoning Re-write being high priority and the fact that the Energy Plan will be incorporated into the Municipal Plan. He also pointed that Eric Vorwald's (of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission) deadline was related to grant funding not municipal plan approval.

Regarding Waterbury LEAP's involvement, Steve will ask if there are any comments on the Energy Plan they want to include in the zoning re-write, and to get that list to the PC.

OTHER BUSINESS

Steve brought up the Historical Society's request for a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) in order to hire an archivist, in part to monitor and document historic/archaeological findings from the Main Street reconstruction project. The Historical Society is interested in recording potential finds from the project excavation that may include items from the 1927 flood. The application would go to the Select Board on September 5th for review and authorization. Would the Planning Commission support the submittal of an MPG grant application for \$10,000? Steve reassured the PC that Barb would write the grant application and he would review it.

MOTION:

Mary Koen moved and Eric Gross seconded the motion to support the submittal of a Municipal Planning Grant Application to support the Waterbury Historical Society's archivist.

VOTE: The motion passed 5-0.

Regarding the proposed cell tower in Shutesville Hill, the hearing officer recommended denial and oral argument before the Public Utilities Commission is scheduled for mid-September.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judi Byron
Secretary