

WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes

February 20, 2018

Present: Members Al Keiller, Elvin Kaplan and BJ Harrington also; Mike Dudley, Tom Kenyon and Deb Shearer (ZA)

1. Call to Order: Chair Al Keiller called the meeting to order at 4:14 PM.
2. Changes or Additions: Al asked to discuss the Brownsville General update under other business.
3. Public Comment: None
4. Town plan update: Jason Rasmussen SWCRPC presented a handout outlining what state laws/statutes have changed since the flood resilience section of the town plan was adopted on February 17, 2015. Overall it is a good plan; well written and comprehensive, and only needs modest updates to address new planning requirements. Based on **legislative changes**, the following should be considered during the next update:
 - State designated village center. Our current plan mentions but the language could be strengthened. There could be possible tax credits or grant priority given to businesses located in the village center area.
 - Act 171 required towns to address fragmentation of forest blocks and habitat connectors.
 - Energy planning goals: The energy planning requirements have been expanded. An “enhanced energy plan” can give greater weight to decisions by the Public Utilities Commission.
 - The region is in the process of adoption a Tactical Basin Plan by the ANR. It addresses surface water quality issues.
 - Now that the town has completed the village sewer expansion Jason recommends the plan reflect this and reconsider future land use descriptions for village area as it may relate to density, downtown revitalization and smart growth principals. Higher densities could be in the village vs resort area.
 - New and better maps are available for flood resilience chapters.
 - Transportation issues could be more fully expanded upon.

Other Changes: Updating surveys: As the sewer system and the mountain purchase have been completed, some of the surveys are becoming dated. Currently, there is a multi-town outdoor recreation planning effort between Windsor, Weathersfield and West Windsor. Perhaps a survey on the economic value of outdoor recreation will be circulating soon. Other issues and possible survey topics can be identified and SWCRPC can help create and administer them.

For the next meeting Deb will flag all the newly required initiatives as they pertain to the old plan. All members can review the 2012 survey and review the Priority Recommendations table on pg. 78.

After reviewing the plan for our next meeting, we can better let Jason know what help we would like from the SWCRPC. In the short term SWCRPC can make sure the flood resilience chapter is attached to the Plan and it reflects the updated adoption date.

5. Consider Mike Dudley to fill planning commission vacancy. **A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to recommend to the Selectboard that Mike Dudley be appointed to serve on the Planning Commission** In addition, Elvin Kaplan tendered his resignation from the Planning Commission effective at Town meeting (3/3). Elvin emphasized going forward he believes it is important for the PC to look into the village center designation in the town plan. The number one threat to a town's economic development is the simple *perception* that a town is in decline. The Planning Commission accepted his resignation and thanked him for his service to the commission through the years.
6. March 1st Webinar on Act 171. Deb will be attending "Implementing Act 171: Land Use Planning To Address Forest Fragmentation". This will address one of the updated state requirement for towns to consider during the planning process. She will forward information to the PC members.
7. Set new regular meeting time and date. To better accommodate all members schedules the PC changed the regular meeting to the 4th Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm. Deb will post the change to the town website.
8. Approve Minutes The meeting minutes of December 11, 2017 were approved as written.
9. Other Business: Al wanted to update the PC on Brownville General Store: A group of concerned residents spoke to a consultant involved in resurgence of general stores on a state-wide level. He gave two strategies that Vermont towns are using. Create a non-profit to run the store or create an LLC. The group decided for the LLC as it can be accomplished much more quickly than a non-profit and transition to an operator ownership could more easily be accomplished. Chris Nesbitt and Cynthia Tucker are heading the group. The property is in a flood-zone and since Irene, more restrictive statewide regulations have been implemented. A discussion followed as to what requirements would be necessary to issue a zoning permit under current regulations. It was noted that the latest Flood Hazard Area Bylaws are currently pending adoption by the Selectboard.
10. Adjourn: After setting March 28 at 6:30PM as the date and time of the next meeting, the Planning Commission adjourned at 5:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Shearer