

UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

Wednesday, September 21, 2016 6:30 PM

Minutes

Planning Commissioners Present: Cynthia Seybolt, Irene Linde, Jerry Adams, David Edson, Andrea Phillips, Nancy Bergersen, Catherine Kearns

Staff/Municipal Representatives Present: Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

Others Present: Bernie Piene, Recreation Committee; Roger Frey, Historical Society; Nate Sullivan, Road Foreman

[6:33] Call to order by Chair C. Seybolt.

[6:33] No public comments were provided.

[6:34] **Chair C. Seybolt opened by explaining that the Planning Commission will be discussing the Capital Improvement Plan that evening (CIP). She continued by inviting the head of the Recreation Committee, Bernie Piene, to discuss their proposal.**

[6:45] **Mr. Piene provided the Planning Commission a “wish list” of items in no particular order.** The list included a shelter to be used in the park that would be constructed in phases, electricity and/or a well installed at the park, a skateboard park, a walking path, replacement of the picnic benches, a warming hut, composting toilets, a bike path, and replacement of the tennis courts. A discussion then ensued about how many people would use the proposed projects.

[6:41] **Mr. Piene explained what type of investment would have to be made in order to restore or reconstruct the tennis courts.** A conservative estimate to fix the tennis courts registered around \$100,000; however, as time passes, the cost of replacing the courts increase due to external factors such as cost of living and inflation. A discussion ensued on what the estimate covered, such as stabilizing the court from subsurface objects, replacing the fence, constructing floating slabs or a tile system. Mr. Piene then discussed the importance of obtaining a commitment from the Town prior to fund raising and receiving State Funding. The Commission agreed that providing funds for restoration did not make logical sense given that the tennis courts will require full replacement in a few years.”

[6:50] **Mr. Frey, from the Historical Society, followed Mr. Piene in presenting to the Commission the Historical Society’s request.** Chair C. Seybolt asked if funding from the Historical Society has already been set aside, which Mr. Frey confirmed that it was. A discussion ensued on how the State match for the grant works. Mr. Frey informed the Commission that the Historical Society is in the process of writing the grant for this year’s deadline, would be used for the Schoolhouse restoration, which the maximum they could receive is \$20,000. Chair C. Seybolt informed Mr. Frey that operation costs were not covered in the CIP. Mr. Frey then proceeded by stating the Historical Society has not planned for major projects beyond 2018; however, the Historical Society will be planning additional projects within the 5-year period of the current CIP, and therefore, will require additional funding.

[7:01] **A discussion ensued about what the renovated school house will be used for upon restoration.** Mr. Frey informed the Commission that the first floor will function like a small museum, while the second floor will be used by the Historical Society for storage and a gathering place for meetings and archiving. Several Commissioners expressed their opinion that they envisioned the school house being a community gathering place for small groups, an opinion they

obtained from the Historical Society during Town Meeting day when they stated that the building would also be used for community purposes. Mr. Frey then discussed the difficulties of renting out the school due to the lack of toilets, high insurance rates, etc.

- [7:09] Nate Sullivan, Underhill's Road Foreman, next discussed his proposals/requests.** Mr. Sullivan informed the Commission that the cost for laying gravel and pavement for the target distances (1.5 miles for pavement) is significantly under-calculated. With what is currently budgeted, road maintenance is not going to meet 1.0 mile of pavement reconstruction, let alone the target goal of 1.5 miles. Mr. Sullivan informed the Commission that his department should receive significantly more funds in order to meet the target. A discussion ensued on how to find cost-savings. Mr. Sullivan explained that if his department did not have to truck in their own materials, it would save time and money.
- [7:15] A discussion then ensued about the ability to stock pile materials, and what, if anything, is allowed to be carried over.** Mr. Sullivan informed the Commission that the Town only receives grants for paving approximately every 3 years, and that current construction is a temporary fix. He continued to explain that there are three deficient bridges in Underhill, each will cost approximately \$250,000. Chair C. Seybolt asked about what cost saving measures could be made on equipment. Mr. Sullivan informed the Commission that costs may increase if the State contract for purchasing equipment lapses.
- [7:21] A discussion then ensued over providing a more realistic budget that allowed the Road Maintenance to reach their target goal of paving 1.5 miles per year, and getting back on the 10-year cycle.** Mr. Sullivan will provide the Planning Commission more figures for them to consider when they are finalizing their CIP recommendation.
- [7:38] Staff Member Strniste provided an update on the requests by the Boards/Commissions who were unavailable for the meeting.** He stated that the Conservation Commission and Energy Committee will be providing their input in the coming days. He then informed the Commission that the Development Review Board's requests may not rise to the level of qualifying for the CIP, and may need to be budgeted in the Planning Department's budget. The DRB also recommended that the upstairs be renovated to allowed for a more reliable public meeting for all of the boards and commissions.
- [7:42] Staff Member Strniste developed a strategy moving forward in regards to the CIP.** He stated that the budget they provide the Selectboard should explain how the numbers were derived. While this may involve more work, the document would be more informative for the Selectboard, themselves, and the taxpayers. While drafting a document of this detail is unlikely for the current deadline, going forward, this should be the type of document provided.
- [7:55] A discussion ensued about the Planning Commission's schedule over the next couple of months.** The Planning Commission agreed to meet on September 28th to finalize the CIP, which will include prioritizing the requests made.
- [8:04] The Commission discussed how to perform better data analysis and how to attract people to participating in surveys.** Suggestions included upgrading the Town's website, which Mr. Piene agreed to offer his assistance.
- [8:15] Staff Member Strniste provided an update to the Commission on what type of constraints were submitted in regards to the Region's Energy Plan.** He shared the list that he compiled from those Commissioners who provided input. Commissioner Edson provided a memo to send

to the RPC, which explains how the Town should address solar and wind power projects. The Planning Commission agreed that the memo should be forwarded to the RPC in addition to the constraints compiled by Staff Member Strniste.

[8:40] Staff member Strniste provided a brief overview of the Planning Advisory Committee meeting, as well as the status of the Bylaw updates.

[8:46] The Planning Commission agreed to finalize the previous meeting's minutes at the next meeting.

[8:46] Chair C. Seybolt asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Linde moved to accept the motion and Commissioner Edson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

The minutes of the September 21, 2016 meeting were accepted this 28th day of Sept, 2016.



Cynthia Seybolt, Planning Commission Chair