

UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, May 28, 2020 @ 6:00 PM

REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING (HELD REMOTELY)

Minutes

Attendance

Planning Commissioners:

Commissioner Johnathan Drew, Chair*
Commissioner David Edson, Vice Chair*
Commissioner Patrick Lamphere (Joined Late)*
Commissioner Val Stori*
Commissioner Brian Tijan*
Commissioner Lea Van Winkle*
Commissioner Sandy Wilmot*

Staff/Municipal Representatives:

Andrew Strniste, Planning Director*

Others Present:

Janet Grant, Underhill Resident*
Brandy Saxton, PlaceSense*

* This symbol denotes that this party joined via Go-To-Meeting. To view the recording of the evening's meeting, visit the Mt. Mansfield Community Television website: <http://mtmansfieldctv.org>, or at the following link: <https://archive.org/details/underhill-planning-05282020>.

[6:03] Chair J. Drew called the meeting to order. One member of general public, Janet Grant, was in attendance, expressing interest in upcoming Planning Commission tasks over the course of the next six months. No general public comment was provided however. No adjustments to the agenda were made. Chair J. Drew explained that due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic, the meeting was held in accordance with Vermont State Law remotely. The meeting will be uploaded to the Mt. Mansfield Community Television (<http://mtmansfieldctv.org>).

AGENDA ITEM: ACTION ITEM UPDATE

[6:05] Staff Member Strniste provided an overview of the action items that were to be performed with the evening's agenda. He informed the Commission of the implementation tasks that the Commission would be exploring over the course of the next few months, as well as advised that he would research the Public Utilities Commission decision for the next meeting. Commissioner Van Winkle advised that she was unable to get ahold of Chris Poley, a potential candidate to fill the Planning Commission vacancy, as well as reported on her research regarding Wi-Fi capabilities in Town. A brief discussion ensued about Wi-Fi capabilities within the Town of Underhill.

AGENDA ITEM: NEW BUSINESS – DRAFT HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

[6:11] Brandy Saxton, from PlaceSense, who was contracted to perform a Housing Needs Assessment, joined the Commission to discuss the draft Housing Needs Assessment Survey that will be distributed amongst Underhill Residents in the coming weeks. Ms. Saxton provided an overview of the survey with various members of the Commission asking questions and providing comments. Questions related to sequencing, rural character, introductory information, targeted participants, clarification about questions, steep slopes, amongst others.

[6:54] Ms. Saxton informed the Commission, in response to Chair J. Drew's question, that she would like to see a response rate of 15% to 20%, as that was common with her previous surveys. She then advised that the COVID-19 virus will present a challenge in distributing the survey;

however, *Front Porch Forum* and Facebook Pages/Groups would be the likely source for dissemination. Staff Member Strniste inquired about post card mailings in order to reach more of the Town's population.

AGENDA ITEM: OLD BUSINESS – TOP 3 IMPLEMENTATION ITEM PROJECTS

[7:06] The Planning Commission then discussed the top 3 implementation items that were ranked by each member, which was tasked to the Commission at the previous meeting. The implementation tasks that were discussed were:

1. Task 3.2.5 (Energy) – Identify specific locations as preferred sites for the siting of renewable energy generation facilities.
2. Task 6.2.3 (Services) – Facilitate meetings with interested parties to explore the expansion of internet service.
3. Task 6.2.1 (Services) – Identify areas that do not have access to internet service.

The Commission agreed that the third task should be performed prior to proceeding with the second task. Commissioners Van Winkle and Drew agreed to investigate the extent to which internet services are provided within the Town. Commissions Wilmot and Stori agreed to explore locations in Town as preferred sites. Chair J. Drew informed the Commission of potential changes to the regulation of solar power generation.

AGENDA ITEM: OLD BUSINESS – PLANNING COMMISSION VACANCY; 2020 TOWN PLAN UPDATES

[7:21] Commissioner Van Winkle informed the Commission that she will continue to reach out to Chris Poley in regards to joining the Commission. Commission Wilmot will inquire with Janet Grant about joining the Commission. Staff Member Strniste provided a brief update regarding the 2020 Town Plan, which included a potential option for conducting the hearings once the Town Hall is available for public gathering.

AGENDA ITEM: OLD BUSINESS – APPROVE PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

[7:25] The minutes of May 14, 2020 will be approved at the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM: OLD BUSINESS – QUORUM FOR NEXT MEETING – THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020

[7:26] A quorum will be present at the Thursday, June 11, 2020 meeting.

[7:27] Commission Van Winkle made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Wilmot seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

The minutes of the May 28, 2020 meeting were accepted this ____ day of _____, 2020.

John Drew, Planning Commission Chair

New Action Items

- Commissioners Van Winkle & Drew* – Research Wi-Fi/Internet capabilities within Underhill.
- Commissioners Wilmot & Stori* – Research potential renewable energy preferred sites within Underhill
- Staff Member Strniste* – Research the recent decision by the Public Service Board regarding the denied solar project in Bennington.
- Commissioner Van Winkle* – Inquire with Chris Poley about joining the Planning Commission.
- Commissioner Wilmot* - Inquired with Janet Grant about joining the Planning Commission.

Old, Incomplete Action Items

- Staff Member Strniste* – Update Planning Commission Calendar.

Completed Action Items

- Planning Commission* – Prioritize top 5 implementation strategies and send to Staff Member Strniste.
- Staff Member Strniste* – Determine which 3 implementation strategies the Commission will pursue.