

UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, September 10, 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*
Commissioner Val Stori*
Commissioner Lea Van Winkle*
Commissioner Sandy Wilmot*

Staff/Municipal Representatives:

Andrew Strniste, Planning Director*

Others Present:

Brandy Saxton (PlaceSense)
Mt. Mansfield Community Television

* 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: <http://mtmansfieldctv.org/underhill-planning-cmsn-9-10-20/>

[6:00] Chair J. Drew called the meeting to order by providing the introductory information of the evening's meeting. Due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic, the meeting was being held in accordance with Vermont State Law remotely. No general public was in attendance for the evening's meeting, and therefore, no general public comment was provided. No adjustments to the agenda were made.

AGENDA ITEM: UPDATE FROM PLACESENSE REGARDING HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

[6:02] Brandy Saxon, from PlaceSense, was in attendance to provide an update about the housing needs assessment survey. She advised that a representative sample of was attained – 304 respondents. Ms. Saxon then proceeded by providing an overview of the survey report distributed to the Planning Commission prior to the evening's meeting. Members of the Commission and Staff Member Strniste asked questions relating to the report. Ms. Saxton will be sending the Commission the findings and analysis at the end of September for their review and will attend the October 8 meeting to discuss further.

[6:34] Discussion ensued about the Housing Needs Assessment timeline, the public outreach campaign, and the structure surrounding public meetings about the assessment. Chair J. Drew inquired as to whether another mass mailing would be beneficial. Ms. Saxton informed the Commission that the non-online option was not heavily used, as only a handful number of people submitted hard copies of the survey.

[6:42] After Ms. Saxton exited from the evening's meeting, the Commission discussed some of the survey results amongst themselves.

AGENDA ITEM: ACTION ITEM UPDATE

[6:49] The Commission and Staff Member Strniste provide an update regarding the action items. Staff Member Strniste informed the Commission that he would reach out to Rick Heh about attending

the Planning Commission meeting on October 22. Chair J. Drew provided an update relating to his solicitation of capital projects from the various committees, boards and commissions, as well as Town Staff, for the Capital Improvement Program.

[6:56] A discussion ensued about one of the strategies in Chapter 3 relating to WiFi. The Commission agreed that the word shall should be removed from the strategy stating that the Town Shall provide residents Wi-Fi internet. Commissioner Van Winkle confirmed that Chris Poley, a prospective member, will contact her once the farmer's market ends.

AGENDA ITEM: OLD BUSINESS – PLANNING COMMISSION & SOCIAL EQUITY IN UNDERHILL

[7:04] Commissioner Stori provided an update related to Essex's and Essex Junction's experience with Abundant Sun. She informed the Commission that Abundant Sun was assisting those communities with equity issues amongst their employees. The department heads advised that beginning with their employees was laying the framework and the beginning part of the process, and that the experience was very eye-opening. The next step is community is to pursue a community-wide endeavor, which could potentially lead to an examination of the Town Plan.

[7:11] The Commission discussed the equity statement that was drafted by Chair J. Drew and related equity issues. Commissioner Van Winkle opined that where the Town is discriminating is in regards to housing, which was exemplified with the elimination of multi-family housing in multiple zoning districts within the Town. Commission Wilmot follow-up stating that Commission should pursue on the broader goal of achieving social equity, and that the Planning Commission should try to identify its goal and work down from there. The Commission discussed how to proceed going forward. Commissioner Stori will research webinars for the Planning Commission to attend, and Chair J. Drew will reach out to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns to obtain any resources they may have. Commissioner Wilmot suggestion inquiring with VLCT in the context of rural communities.

AGENDA ITEM: OLD BUSINESS – 2020 TOWN PLAN UPDATES

[7:37] Staff Member Strniste informed the Commission that he had no updates relating to the 2020 Town Plan Updates.

AGENDA ITEM: APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S) & QUORUM FOR NEXT MEETING

[7:38] The Commission will approve the minutes of Thursday, August 27, 2020 at the next meeting – Thursday, September 24, 2020.

[7:38] A quorum will be present at the Thursday, September 24, 2020.

[7:38] Chair J. Drew made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Tijan seconded the motion and was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

The minutes of the September 10, 2020 meeting were accepted this ___day of _____, 2020.

John Drew, Planning Commission Chair

New Action Items

- Chair J. Drew* – Inquire with VLCT regarding Social Equity Resources for Town Plans and Zoning Regulations (and any other Town documents and forms).
- Commissioner Stori* – Research potential social equity webinars for the Commission to Attend.
- Staff Member Strniste* – Invite Rick Heh to October 22 Planning Commission Meeting.
- Staff Member Strniste* – Send Chair J. Drew Financial Officer’s Email Address

Ongoing Action Items

- Chair J. Drew* – Inquire with other boards, commissioners and committee about capital projects for the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
- Commissioners Van Winkle & Drew* – Research Wi-Fi/Internet capabilities within Underhill.
- Commissioners Wilmot & Stori* – Research potential renewable energy preferred sites within Underhill.
- Commissioners Van Winkle* – Inquire with Chris Poley about joining the Commission in the fall once he has more availability.

Old, Incomplete Action Items

- Staff Member Strniste* – Update Planning Commission Calendar.
- Staff Member Strniste* – Make the discussed changes to the Historic and Cultural Resources Chapter and disseminate to the Commission upon completion.

Completed Action Items

- Commission* – The Commission is to review the equity statement disseminated by Chair J. Drew.
- Commissioner Stori* – Reach out to the Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction regarding the social audits being performed on their Plans.
- Chair J. Drew* – Draft social equity statement for draft Town Plan.

Deadlines

- *None at the moment.*

Upcoming Agenda Items

- September 24, 2020
 - Housing Needs Assessment
 - Discussion of public outreach
 - Discussion of holding public meetings
 - Reporting Back on Potential Society Equity Webinars and VLCT Resources
- October 8, 2020
 - Brandy Saxton to Attend to discuss findings and Analysis
- October 22, 2020
 - *Unconfirmed:* Underhill Historical Society