

# UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, February 1, 2018 6:30 PM

## Minutes

**Planning Commissioners Present:** Chair C. Seybolt, David Edson, Nancy Bergersen, Pat Lamphere, Catherine Kearns, Johnathan Drew

**Staff/Municipal Representatives Present:** Andrew Strniste, Planning Director; Sherri Morin, Town Clerk

**Others Present:** None

[6:25] The Planning Commission convened at Underhill Town Hall at 6:25pm.

[6:29] Chair C. Seybolt called the meeting to order.

[6:29] Chair C. Seybolt asked for public comment. No members of the public were present to make public comment.

[6:30] Town Clerk, Sherri Morin, was invited to the evening's meeting to discuss what actions can be performed prior to, and during, Town Meeting Day. She provided the Planning Commission an informational handout that summarized the Vermont State statutes. She explained that campaign materials, as well as any associated literature, pertaining to ballot items cannot be found in polling places, which includes the clerk's office and the entirety of Brown's River Middle School. She then advised that conversations about ballot items are not permitted as well. Ms. Morin informed the Commission that she was contacted by the Secretary of State's Office in the past regarding the Schoolhouse, and confirmed that she is strict on enforcing the laws. Any handouts are recommended to be the size of a palm card or easily able to fold in half. Chair C. Seybolt asked if the voters will feel as if they violated the law should they bring materials into the building. Ms. Morin responded that either her or a Justice of the Peace (JPs) would confront the voter and ask the voter to put away the materials while not making a scene. Ms. Morin then confirmed that the Planning Commission could have whatever they wanted outside in a designated area, including signs; however, they were to be personed at all times and not left unattended. Commissioner Edson inquired about questions from the floor, and Ms. Morin explained the law changed a few years ago to allow ballot items to be discussed on the floor; however, the moderator could shut down the conversation if the discussion becomes campaigning. In addition, she informed the Commission on why discussions on the floor is an issue – because Town Meeting Day and voting happen simultaneously with each other. Commissioner Lamphere advised that putting this type of information on Front Porch Forum would be helpful so people will understand the Town Meeting Day process. Ms. Morin advised that she would put some type of summary of the materials provided to the Commission on Front Porch Forum.

[6:46] Chair C. Seybolt began a discussion pertaining to the informational meeting to be held on February 15, 2018. Commissioner Kearns informed the Commission she would be unavailable. Commissioner Drew and Staff Member Strniste advised that the information to be conveyed to the public should be concise and in plain language. Commissioner Drew stated that the two points to emphasize are the purpose of the Underhill Center Village District and that the Planning Commission responded to the public feedback by making changes to the proposed amendments. Staff Member Strniste advised that he would send the PowerPoint presentation and ballot items to the Commission, as Commissioner Drew informed the Commission that he would work toward

writing some of the materials for the informational meeting. Each Commissioner is to send their response to Staff Member Strniste, which he would forward to Commissioner Drew.

- [6:58] Staff Member Strniste advised that the Commission should post about the informational meeting on Front Porch Forum, which Chair C. Seybolt advised that she would do. Commissioner Bergersen suggested that the Planning Commission may not have to do much on Town Meeting Day; however, various Commissioners felt that there should be someone outside between 7am and 10am, as well as between 4pm and 7pm, at the very least. A discussion ensued on whether the Commission should create a poster for when they are outside. Commissioner Lamphere stated that the Commission should consider informing the public that the properties in Underhill Center were at one time conforming, and that they have become more noncompliant overtime. Commissioner Drew opined that the Underhill Center was continually shrinking as the businesses have left the Center altogether. A short discussion ensued about the Water Conservation District. Staff Member Strniste will inquire about how much it costs for First Step to print a poster.
- [7:17] Staff Member Strniste provided an update on the Development Review Board's docket. Specifically, Staff Member Strniste provided an overview about the McLaughlin appeal, Davis subdivision, Marias subdivision, Timbers subdivision, Jacobs subdivision, and Duval conditional use review application.
- [7:30] A discussion ensued about prospective Planning Commission Member Lea Van Winkle. Commissioner Lamphere advised that many of the Commissioners already know her, and did not see why they had to have her in for another interview. **Chair C. Seybolt asked for a motion to recommend to the Selectboard that Ms. Lea Van Winkle be appointed to the Commission.** The motion was made by Commissioner Edson and seconded by Commissioner Drew. **The motion was approved unanimously.**
- [7:39] A discussion ensued about Phil Jacobs and the materials that were discussed at the previous Planning Commission hearing. Chair C. Seybolt advised that Mr. Jacobs seems to want to develop the land in a way that is best for the Town of Underhill, as well as wanting affordable housing. In addition, she advised that Mr. Jacobs seemed to want to develop a master plan; however, he does not want to be the point person on the project. Commissioner Drew asked if the Planning Commission had a role in the project, and Chair C. Seybolt advised that she did not believe so; however, the project seemed to align with the Town's Vision. A discussion ensued about collaboration efforts between the Town, Mr. Jacobs and potential developers.
- [7:51] **Commissioner Kearns made a motion to approve the minutes of December 21, 2017,** which was seconded by Commissioner Drew. **The motion was approved unanimously.** Quorums from the January 11, 2018 and January 18, 2018 meetings were not present to approve those minutes. Commissioners Kearns and Bergersen will be absent for next meeting – February 15, 2018. Staff Member Strniste advised that he would confirm when the Selectboard's informational meeting will be.
- [7:54] Chair C. Seybolt informed the Board that Ms. Van Winkle would be a good fit for the Town Plan focus group. In addition, Chair C. Seybolt advised that she would like to prepare questions for the Conservation Commission and the Energy Committee based on the implementation plan in the Town Plan.
- [7:58] The focus groups did not meet since the Planning Commission's meeting ran longer than expected. No other business was offered for discussion.

[7:56] **Chair C. Seybolt asked for a motion to Adjourn.** Commissioner Edson made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Lamphere. The motion was **approved unanimously.**

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Respectfully Submitted By:

Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

The minutes of the February 1, 2018 meeting were accepted this 1<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2018.

  
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Cynthia Seybolt, Planning Commission Chair