

UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 31, 2017 6:30 PM

Minutes

Planning Commissioners Present: Vice Chair Carolyn Gregson, Andrea Phillips, David Edson, Pat Lamphere, Nancy Bergersen, Johnathan Drew

Staff/Municipal Representatives Present: Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

Others Present: None

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

[6:33] Vice Chair C. Gregson called the meeting to order.

[6:33] Vice Chair C. Gregson asked for public comment. No comments were provided.

[6:34] **Vice Chair C. Gregson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of May 18, 2017.**

Commissioner Bergersen made a motion to approve the minutes of May 18, 2017. Commissioner Drew seconded the motion. **The minutes of May 18, 2017, as presented, were approved unanimously.**

[6:37] Staff Member Strniste provided a proposed timeline on finalizing the proposed bylaw updates, which he proposed mid-July, as a deadline. He then stated that he wanted to provide more time in case the Commission wishes to make edits, as the proposed edits are substantially greater than the last round of edits in 2014.

[6:41] Vice Chair C. Gregson updated Commissioner Phillips of the changes proposed regarding multi-family housing in the various zoning districts.

[6:44] A discussion ensued regarding the CCRPC (Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission) memorandum sent in April. Commissioner Drew stated his dissatisfaction with Act 174. Commissioner Drew and Staff Member Strniste discussed the implications of the Act's language pertaining to deferring v. considering. Staff Member Strniste asked if the Commission wanted to defer to CCRPC's 2018 Energy Plan or if the Commission wanted to get the Plan certified by the Public Service Board. Commissioner Edson expressed hesitation about deferring to the County's energy plan. He went on to express his thoughts about the old Town dump and the associated issues, stating that if someone wished to provide solar panels on the site, then the contamination issues would be theirs. The Commission agreed. Vice Chair C. Gregson stated her concern about wind power, while Commissioner Phillips stated her observation that wind power does not seem to be as profitable as solar. A discussion ensued about how aesthetics are considered regarding solar and wind energy, as well as the maintenance associated with both forms of energy. The Commissioner then sought an explanation of how CCRPC will guide us once their plan is certified in 2018. Chair C. Gregson proposed tabling the discussion about alternative energy until after the bylaw updates were addressed.

[7:00] Staff Member Strniste and Commissioner Drew both indicated the enormous undertaking there would be if the Commission determined they wanted the Plan certified by the Public Service Board. Vice Chair C. Gregson opined that Underhill is not adequate for solar given the topography issues. Commissioner Lamphere explained that solar and wind could potentially ruin the Town, rural area and aesthetics if these sources of energy were not situated correctly. The Commission agreed to update the Town Plan after the proposed bylaw updates were complete,

and to NOT certify the Plan with the Public Service Board. Staff Member Strniste stated that the Commission should focus on where to locate alternative energy sources that have objective criteria, rather than subjective criteria, as objective criteria are more likely to be upheld.

- [7:07] Staff Member Strniste asked for a volunteer to be a liaison between the Planning Commission and the Energy Committee since his current workload would likely prevent him from being an effective contact between the two entities. None of the present Commissioners volunteered. Staff Member Strniste advised he would be the liaison as a result.
- [7:10] The Commission determined that the Energy Committee should meet with the Planning Commission after the bylaw update deadline.
- [7:12] Staff Member Strniste advised the Commission that they should review the definition documents he provided at the meeting for the next Commission meeting – June 15.
- [7:18] A discussion ensued about the possible creation of a new zoning district for Underhill Center. Commissioner Lamphere stated the idea would be controversial. Vice Chair C. Gregson took a straw vote to see who was in favor of the new district. All were in favor. Vice Chair C. Gregson stated she would not like to see people in the Center be forced to obtain waivers or variances for projects. Commissioner Lamphere saw this as a tool to make the area have cleaner water and better sewage disposal.
- [7:22] The Commission discussed the implications of creating a new district, and whether it could be voted on separately during Town Meeting Day, whether they should wait until 2019, and the type of language that can be written on the ballot.
- [7:28] The Commission briefly discussed what the setbacks should be for the new district, but did not make any decisions. Staff Member Strniste distributed a map to each commissioner, and the Commission proceeded to identify a district.
- [7:58] Staff Member Strniste advised that he would provide an analysis of the lots that were chosen to be in the district.
- [8:03] Commissioner Lamphere advised that he would discuss with the Conservation Commission proposed edits the Conservation Commission wishes to make regarding bylaw updates.
- [8:03] **Vice Chair C. Gregson asked for a motion to adjourn.** Commissioner Lamphere made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Bergersen. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted By:
Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

The minutes of the May 31, 2017 meeting were accepted this 20 day of July, 2017.



Vice Chair C. Gregson, Planning Commission Vice Chair