

# UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, February 14, 2019 @ 6:00 PM

Minutes

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## Attendance

### **Planning Commissioners:**

Commissioner Carolyn Gregson, Chair  
Commissioner Johnathan Drew, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Nancy Bergersen  
Commissioner David Edson  
Commissioner Kail Romanoff  
Commissioner Sandy Wilmot

### **Staff/Municipal Representatives:**

Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

### **Others Present:**

Resident, Cynthia Seybolt (95 Pleasant Valley)

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[5:55] Members of the Planning Commission started to convene at Underhill Town Hall around 5:55 pm.

[6:03] Chair C. Gregson called the meeting to order. No public was in attendance to provide public comment.

### **AGENDA ITEM: 2020 TOWN PLAN – FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION PERTAINING TO CENTER FOR RURAL STUDIES VISIT**

[6:04] Commissioner Drew informed the Commission that he visited with the Center for Rural Studies (CRS) to inquire about assistance with the Town Plan. CRS informed Commissioner Drew that they could assist with a fee, typically in the range of \$8,000 to \$16,000 depending on how much assistance was required. CRS also advised that Municipal Planning Grants are available to assist in funding; however, Commissioner Drew informed the Commission that September 2018 was the deadline to apply for grants, and therefore, they had missed that opportunity for funding assistance. Commissioner Drew then recommended that the Commission should be aware of potential opportunities to pursue planning grants.

[6:07] Resident Cynthia Seybolt advised that when the survey was done in 2008, and the Town had paid for the survey, Underhill Residents were disgruntled that the Town allocated funds towards the survey.

### **AGENDA ITEM: 2020 TOWN PLAN – SURVEY QUESTIONS DISCUSSION**

[6:08] A discussion then ensued about the draft survey to be submitted during Town Meeting Day and on Survey Monkey. Staff Member Strniste advised that he was informed by Ms. Karen McKnight that Survey Monkey does not allow notes to be added at the end. Commissioner Wilmot inquired about making the notes different colors. Commissioner Drew opined that the survey was becoming too complicated, as the previous survey did not contain any of the background information contemplated for this upcoming survey. Commissioner Wilmot suggested rearranging the survey to make the first series of questions easier, and then suggested keeping in mind what the answers will tell the Commission.

[6:15] The Commission discussed the historic and cultural resources questions. After initially contemplating taking out the question, the Commission reworded the question to make it open-

ended. In regards to the land use question pertaining to Underhill Center, the Commission decided to exclude language pertaining to constraints in Underhill Center.

[6:28] The Commission continued to review all of the questions of the survey making edits and deletions along the way. The Commission determined to add a question pertaining to recreation services being offered, and to specifically inquire with residents what other recreation opportunities they would like to see. More discussion ensued about various questions throughout the proposed survey.

[7:10] The Commission discussed what survey questions should be included under the housing section of the survey. They agreed to recycle the housing survey questions from the previous 2008 survey. Staff Member Strniste then recommended that the Commission should also consider asking a question about affordable housing, possibly modeling a question after question #5 in the survey. The Commission was tasked on coming up with affordable housing strategy-related questions. Commissioner Wilmot also suggested providing a question related to economic development, and whether the Town should pursue some type of marketing strategy. The Commission was also tasked with coming up with marketing strategy-related questions.

[7:19] The Commission agreed that the accompanying notes for all questions should be eliminated in order to keep the survey as simple as possible. Resident Seybolt suggested adding a question about retaining the rural character of Underhill in the land use section of the survey.

[7:33] Commissioner Drew made a **motion to approve the minutes of January 31, 2019**. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Romanoff and **approved unanimously**. Commissioner Bergersen exited the meeting. Commissioner Edson opined that the question about Rare & Endangered Species is misleading. Commissioner Drew advised that at this stage in the process, the Commission was just trying to gauge everyone's sentiment, and that they are not making regulations. Commissioner Wilmot provided background on rare vulnerable species, and that the discussion to be had in some circumstances is to either retain the natural history of the state or not worry since the species may be located elsewhere. The Commission reviewed the remaining questions.

[7:49] All those Commissioners present at the evening's meeting will present at the next Planning Commission meeting – February 28, 2019. Staff Member Strniste recommended that the Commissioners start brainstorming on when they should hold the public forums.

[7:52] Commissioner Drew made a **motion to adjourn**. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Edson and **approved unanimously**.

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Respectfully Submitted By:

Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

The minutes of the February 14, 2019 meeting were accepted this 28 day of February 2019.

  
Carolyn Gregson, Planning Commission Chair