

UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, November 8, 2018 @ 6:00 PM

Minutes

Attendance

Planning Commissioners:

Commissioner Carolyn Gregson, Chair
Commissioner Johnathan Drew, Vice Chair
Commissioner Nancy Bergersen
Commissioner David Edson
Commissioner Patrick Lamphere
Commissioner John "Kail" Romanoff
Commissioner Cynthia Seybolt
Commissioner Lea Van Winkle
Commissioner Sandy Wilmot

Staff/Municipal Representatives:

Andrew Strniste, Planning Director
Betsy Chapek, Conservation Commissioner
Amy Golodetz, Conservation Commissioner
Karen McKnight, Conservation Commissioner
Dan Steinbaurer, Conservation Commissioner
Steve Webster, Energy Committee Member

Others Present:

None

[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.

[6:03] Chair C. Gregson asked for public comment. No public was in attendance, and therefore, no public comment was provided.

AGENDA ITEM: 2020 TOWN PLAN – FORUM GROUP 1 (LAND USE; NATURAL RESOURCES; HISTORICAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES) DISCUSSION

[6:04] Commissioner Seybolt advised that her group (herself, Commissioner Edson, and Commissioner Romanoff) went through the three sections, and looked for ways to change the questions as they relate to their sections from what was previously administered in the 2008 survey. Commissioner Edson opined that the original questions were too broad, and therefore, suggested providing two answers for several questions: add restrictions or defer to the state, which would help narrow down public opinion. Commissioner Drew opined that the answers would not elicit helpful information, as survey participants will likely pick the option with less restrictions. Staff Member Strniste advised that if survey participants were expected to conduct their own research prior to answering survey questions, the survey would have a low response rate. Commissioner Drew then advised that the survey would elicit results that you the Commission would already expect. Commissioner Wilmot suggested teasing out different topics and possibly providing some type of educational statement about each.

[6:21] Conservation Commission Chair, Karen McKnight, advised that survey participants are unlikely to know the regulations, and possibly leaving a space to provide comments. Discussion ensued about potential survey question six, and Staff Member Strniste advised that bonus density could be another potential option. Commissioner Seybolt inquired why the Commission would like to provide bonus densities as an option when the Commissioner determined that they did not want bonus densities. Commissioner Van Winkle asked a clarification question about the old survey in comparison with the survey they were creating.

- [6:34] Commissioner Wilmot opined that the proposed survey question seven did not provide any beneficial feedback. Commissioner Drew agreed, advising that the question did not yield any additional information than what was known prior to conducting the survey.
- [6:40] Commissioner Lamphere inquired about proposed survey question 6 again, and advised that residents may be uninformed about potential difficulties & cost in preserving open space. Conservation Commission Chair McKnight opined asking if people were open to a potential 1% increase in property tax may be a potentially good question. A question was asked about how specific the survey questions should be. Staff Member Strniste advised that questions could be either specific or general. He recommended that where there were specific issues the Commission would like to know about, then the questions could be specific. Where the Commission is unaware of public sentiment, general questions could be utilized.
- [6:47] Conservation Commission Chair McKnight recommended that survey participants provide how many acres they own, which Commissioner Romanoff suggested adding a range for participants to choose from. Conservation Commission Chair McKnight advised that the results could be sorted to glean information if participants advised how many acres they owned. Conservation Commissioner Betsy Chapek agreed that education around each issue is important, though she was not sure how to perform that action. She also recommended that the Conservation Commission could assist with the education piece, at least as the information relates to natural resources. Commissioner Edson advised he was concerned about providing the issues regarding each topic. Commissioner Seybolt asked if the Conservation Commission would be amenable to reading the Natural Resources section and provide feedback.
- [6:57] The Planning Commission asked the conservation commission on what tasks they have achieved since the implementation of the current Town Plan. Conservation Commission Chair advised that they have worked on educating the general public about various topics, as well as overseeing Town owned property. She also informed the Planning Commission that they had been working to find areas that could be conserved, as well as tracking and understanding wildlife. Commissioner Van Winkle inquired about deer yards. Conservation Commission Chair advised that the Conservation Commission was working on creating venues for wildlife to cross roads, as well as tracking to see if corridors correlate with open space. Conservation Commissioner Steinbauer advised that connectivity is disappearing in Vermont, and that the Conservation Commission is working towards enlightening landowners about the issue.
- [7:03] Staff Member Strniste advised that the Conservation Commission could assist in the development of a natural resources plan, would provide the Development Review Board more regulatory authority. Commissioner Edson had questions about natural resources, and voiced his skepticism about identifying definitive areas. Commissioner Drew advised that the wildlife population is about population dynamics and maintaining an area. Conservation Commissioner Chair McKnight recommended that a couple Conservation Commission members could meet with a few Planning Commission members to discuss some of the information in more detail. Additionally, the Conservation Commission could provide the requested information for the Planning Commission in December. Commissioner Wilmot asked the Conservation Commission to keep renewable energy siting in mind when considering natural resources.
- [7:16] Commissioner Van Winkle asked clarification questions about the proposed solar array at the Beartown Road gravel pit. Conservation Commission Chair McKnight advised that a solar array could not be erected at New Road because the array would be operated by the Vermont Electric Coop, and as a result, only the garage, and not other Town facilities, would be able to utilize the

energy created. Conservation Commissioner Steinbauer provided additional information about why the solar array could not be erected on top of the capped landfill.

[7:25] A discussion ensued about the clearing of trees along New Road. Staff Member Strniste then informed the Planning Commission about the recently approved *Unified Land Use & Development Regulations*, as well as an expected visitor from Green Lantern Development at the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM: APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

[7:36] Commissioner Van Winkle made a motion to **approve the minutes of July 12, 2018**. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Drew and **approved unanimously**.

[7:37] Commissioner Van Winkle made a motion to **approve the minutes of the October 11, 2018 hearing**. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lamphere and **approved unanimously**.

[7:38] Commissioner Bergersen made a motion to **approve the minutes of the October 11, 2018 meeting**. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lamphere and **approved unanimously**.

[7:38] Commissioner Seybolt made a motion to **approve the minutes of August 23, 2018**. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lamphere and **approved unanimously**.

[7:39] Commissioner Bergersen made a motion to **approve the minutes of October 25, 2018**. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Van Winkle and **approved unanimously**.

[7:40] Chair C. Gregson advised that she would be unavailable for the following week's meeting. Vice Chair J. Drew will chair the meeting.

[7:43] Commissioner Edson made a **motion to adjourn**. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bergersen and **approved unanimously**.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

The minutes of the November 8, 2018 meeting were accepted this 28 day of Nov., 2018.


Carolyn Gregson, Planning Commission Chair

New Action Items

- Staff Member Strniste: Make ten (10) copies of the Natural Resource section of the Town Plan to distribute to the Conservation Commission.
- Staff Member Strniste: Email Natural Resources section of the Town Plan to Steve Webster.

Old, Incomplete Action Items

- Staff Member Strniste: Provide materials pertaining to the zoning pamphlet in the coming weeks.
- Staff Member Strniste: Providing a map of where the capital projects are located.

- Staff Member Strniste: Obtain a report on how Selectboard Member Johnson derived at the funding sources (i.e.) for the identified capital projects.
- Chair C. Gregson: Write letter to Commissioner Glidden regarding his resignation
- Commission: Review memorandum from Transportation Board.
- Forum Group: Each forum group write as many survey questions as possible.
- Commission: Review Town Plan sections that were volunteered and develop presentation materials for discussion at upcoming Planning Commission meetings.

Completed Action Items