

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of January 21, 2019**  
**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

Meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by Chair Hill-Eubanks.

- I. **Roll Call:** Present for the meeting were Commissioners Aaron Rhodes, Paul Brown, Laura Hill-Eubanks. Also attending were Brandy Saxton (by video call), planner from PlaceSense; and David Feinauer and Kaitlyn Keating from Northfield Community Development Network (NCDN).
  
- II. **Set/Adjust Agenda:**
  
- III. **Public Participation (scheduled):** All attending participated in the discussions on the Town Plan update.
  
- IV. **Town Plan Update:** Continue to review 1<sup>st</sup> drafts of chapters with planner Saxton.
  - a. **Economic Development:** Discussed the Economic Development draft chapter, and the NCDN's comments and potential additions or changes. NCDN would like to see support for an Economic Development Director in town administration. This could help the town obtain grants and other incentives for local economic development. NCDN will send language they would like to see on this.

Look at Norwich University's contributions to town revenue versus properties and the cost of services. Check to see which properties are tax-exempt; data shows that it pays taxes on 16 of its 60 properties. Also look at the number of employees it has locally versus remotely.

Clarify some of the statements in the Plan, such as those referring to infrastructure (which types). Add local organizations to Strengths section.

Lengthy discussion around the idea of changing the zoning regulations to have fewer Conditional Uses. Decide which uses should be Permitted according to the district in question, and have Site Plan Review decide the standards for the development. This makes it easier for everyone to know which types of development will be welcome where. Standards for the Permitted uses in each district should be decided carefully and enforced. Conditional Use review should be used for those uses that may or may not be appropriate to the district.

Visions statement for the Plan will be drafted after all chapters have been written.

b. **Land Use:** PC has the draft Land Use map, and the LU chapter should be sent soon. Review at next meeting.

c. **Work Plan:** Send out the draft chapters that we have received thus far to those groups, town officials, etc. that should review and give input. Public forums for more input are to be planned soon.

**V. Better Connections Grant Application Update.** PC members discussed the Better Connections grant application that would connect recreation areas and trails to the village centers. Consensus that PC supports the grant application.

**VI. Water Quality Reclassification Project Overview.** The state has implemented new water quality classifications. The state and the CVRPC are working to upgrade the water quality classifications of some sections of rivers and streams in the region. Some of those that are eligible are in Northfield. This will improve water quality and potential protections. NCC will host speakers at its February meeting to explain the process, which it may become involved in, and the PC is invited to attend.

**VII. Approval of Minutes:** December 17, 2018. Rhodes moved to approve the minutes; Brown seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0.

**VIII. Other Business:**

**IX. Next Regular Meeting:** February 18, 2019.

**X. Adjournment:**

*These minutes are subject to changes and approval at the next regular meeting, but are substantially correct.*