

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of July 15, 2019 Meeting

Meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM by Chair Hill-Eubanks.

Roll Call: Present for the meeting were Commissioners Nancy Peck, Aaron Rhodes and Laura Hill-Eubanks. Also present was Zoning Administrator Mitch Osiecki. Commissioner Ruth Ruttenberg was absent.

Set/Adjust Agenda: No adjustments to the agenda.

Town Plan Update: Discussion of a memo from Clare Rock of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. Hill-Eubanks had a follow-up phone conversation with Clare Rock and subsequently drafted a reply. The memo from Clare Rock and the response from Hill-Eubanks will be attached to the final meeting minutes.

Discussion of memo, which largely focused on issues related to housing. One suggestion was to consider language to more explicitly allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Also, the plan may need to make it clear that multi-family and manufactured housing are permissible in traditional (conventional) single-family dwelling areas.

Planning Commission may need to research the extent to which current zoning regulations restrict or limit multi-family dwellings.

The observation was made that it will be important to strike a balance between massaging language in the draft plan to satisfy CVRPC concerns, while avoiding edits that might be considered substantive changes to the plan.

Discussion of language addressing energy compliance. The CVRPC has concerns that energy data and maps (page 41) don't clearly show "sufficient land to meet" the state's renewable energy targets. Brandy Saxton offered a response that the plan addresses the state's goals, but agrees that some maps may need to be enhanced.

Comment on language found on page 50. May need to clarify status of interim fluvial erosion hazard provisions. Did the town adopt interim zoning as permanent? May want to discuss this topic with Jeff Schultz.

Discussion of Survey Results. The decision was made to display a survey summary in the final draft, but the comments will be removed.

Further discussion on housing. A suggestion was offered that the section on page 46 addressing diversifying housing stock would be the appropriate place to add the reference to ADUs raised earlier.

Presentation of the draft town plan to the Select Board is slated for the next Select Board meeting, on July 23. So far, the major concern expressed by the Select Board seems to be focused on changes to the land use map. Sentiment is solidly behind keeping rural areas rural.

Work Plan: Need to have a final draft in place ahead of the warned hearings. Draft plan can be altered based on comment received at public hearings, as long as alterations are not deemed to make substantive changes to the plan.

Approval of Minutes: Tabled until August meeting.

Next Regular Meeting: August 19, 2019.

Adjournment: Peck moved to adjourn; Rhodes seconded. **Motion carried 3-0.**
Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.