

Mendon Planning Commission Minutes January 7, 2019

Present: Justin Lindholm, Phil Douglas, Neil Langer, Fred Bagley and Teri Corsones were present. The minutes of the December 3, 2018 Mendon Planning Commission meeting were approved with no changes.

Municipal Planning Grant Application: Ed Bove from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission was present. He explained that Elysa Smigielski is no longer with the RRPC, and he will continue the Town Plan review work in her stead. He and members reviewed the timeline for completing the review that was set forth in the December meeting minutes. Ed indicated that the timeline was feasible, with some minor adjustments.

With respect to an updated zoning map, Ed indicated that Mendon's zoning map coincides with its "future land use" map. In the event of discrepancies between the two, the future land use map controls. Members indicated that they prefer the two maps remain consistent with each other, but be updated. Ed said that the RRPC will update the zoning map/future land use map to comport with current conditions.

With respect to updated population data, Ed will use the American Community Survey data to update the Mendon population data in the Town Plan. The American Community Survey is an ongoing survey by the U.S. Census Bureau. It regularly gathers information previously contained in the decennial census.

Nicole was not able to attend the meeting, but had provided an updated version of the Town Plan that she and Fred worked on to incorporate revisions discussed at the December meeting and other revisions that they suggest. Fred went over the revisions in general. With respect to the Economic Development and the Recreation sections slated for discussion at this month's meeting, several recommendations were discussed.

In the Economic Development section, the reference to obtaining "Village Center Designation" status should remain, given the advantages potentially associated with that status. The affected area should be identified as such on the future land use map. New additions to the section should include references to the Mendon Economic Development Committee, the Tax Stabilization effort recently discussed with the Selectboard, the decision to seek participation in the "Community Visit Program" offered by the Vermont Council on Rural Development, and opportunities connected with the Rolston Rest Project. There should also be mention of the several hotels on Route 4 that are currently "underutilized", and possible uses for them. As an example, similar structures elsewhere in the state have been made into condominiums. The Alpine Pipeline should be referenced in more detail, in light of the advantages it offers future developers regarding convenient septic connections. Ed also recommended language linking the Economic Development section with the Recreation section, given the ideas which have been

discussed to encourage economic development through the many recreational opportunities in Mendon.

In the Recreation section, references should be made to the recreation-focused ideas discussed to date, including converting a portion of the space at the Recreation Area into a dog park, developing a “hiking app” to map out the many different hiking trails already available in Mendon, re-habilitating the Girl Scout Camp, and encouraging businesses that are associated with the hiking, biking, mountain biking, fishing, bird watching and boating opportunities available in the vicinity. Such businesses might include recreational equipment sales and rentals, trail guides, box lunch and other food sales and transportation to near-by recreation sites. Mention should also be made of the partnering opportunities available in the recreation arena, including partnering with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) and the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (V.A.S.T.) for recreation projects, and with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for grant opportunities. The reference to a scenic road designation should be removed inasmuch as that type of designation is apparently no longer available.

Upon receipt of the next draft, Teri will send it out to members individually for further review. Ed will bring data for the transportation section to the February meeting.

Zoning Administrator Position: Teri reported that Sara confirmed that the current three-year term for Zoning Administrator ends on March 31, 2019. The Planning Commission will recommend an appointment to the Selectboard, and the Selectboard will decide on the appointment. Members will interview persons interested in the Zoning Administrator position at the February MPC meeting. Teri also relayed to members the answers that Steve Cosgrove provided about the zoning questions posed at the December meeting.

The next meeting of the Mendon Planning Commission is scheduled for Monday, February 4, 2019 at 5:15 p.m. at the Mendon Town Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Teri Corsones