



Village of Manchester, Vermont

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission Held on the 15th day of September 2021.

Members Present: Chair Audrey Kolloff, Vice-Chair Richard Heilemann, Renee Waller, Anthony MacLaurin, Lu French

Member(s) Absent:

Others Present: Cat Bryars, Mark Anders, Jim Hand, Jennifer Woolf Administrative Officer and PC Clerk

Chair Audrey Kolloff called the meeting to order at 11:36 A.M.

Minutes:

Approve the draft minutes of the August 18, 2021 meeting

Heilemann motioned with a second by MacLaurin, and the Planning Commission voted to approve the draft minutes of the meeting of August 18, 2021. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business:

Discussion of Bylaws Revisions with Cat Bryars (BCRC)

Kolloff invited Bryars to discuss Bylaws revisions at a county level. Bryars explained that there is additional MPG funding available for bylaw modernization, most specifically for housing. Bryars specified that the Planning Commission should be at the helm for bylaw revisions not the DRB. Bryars has put the village bylaws at the top priority for housing bylaw revision review by the BCRC and the Planning Commission needs to apply for the grant in the fall (November). Heilemann clarified that the grant application has not yet gone in and that it will happen in the fall. Bryars clarified that the BCRC will take care of the application and the village just needs to sign off on it. Additionally the BCRC requires a resolution from the Board of Trustees in order to sign on for the grant and services. Kolloff asked Bryars to clarify the focus: overall village bylaws with more dense areas specifically, can the village be made more dense? French asked if this is a focus on housing overall or just affordable housing. Bryars stated that "affordable" is a vague term and affordable housing looks different for everyone, therefore the study will focus on housing overall.

Planned Business:

MPG Survey Response

Kolloff invited Mark Anders to give a summary of the survey's 73 responses. Anders stated that the survey can remain open for a couple more weeks. Going through the survey questions and their responses Anders explained that the majority of responders supported the use of the courthouse as a performing arts center but there was great concern about parking and competition. Regarding transportation, 73% said they were comfortable walking in the village with very specific suggestions for improvement such as a sidewalk on Ways Ln. Regarding cycling 16% said they were safe/comfortable cycling in the village and 3.5% said they were safe/comfortable cycling on 7a. A vast majority was 7a to be more safe/comfortable for cycling. Regarding driving, most of the concern was regarding the intersection of 7a and seminary. Regarding parking, the majority said there was plenty and 25% wanted more. Kolloff noticed that the majority of comments on traffic related to BBA drop off and pick up and that she would like to have a dialog with BBA regarding this. French commented that she bikes on 7a frequently and has noticed places for improvement, she suggested decreasing the green space (utility strips) to add in a bike lane. Heilemann mentioned that powerlines are on one side of 7a and that the village should consider a 10 year plan to redo the streets with buried powerlines and redo the sidewalk

entirely to potentially have room for a bike lane. Anders suggested a roundabout near the BBA busy intersection. French suggested that a police traffic guide would help during those two times (BBA drop off and pick up). Heilemann commented about how his high school had student patrols directing traffic and how that could help at BBA. Anders said that having police traffic guides is a good thing to test out temporarily as there is no big upfront cost (unlike a roundabout).

Anders stated the next steps being to brainstorm potential ideas and solutions then present the ideas to the public and await response. Kolloff suggested connecting this to the Board of Trustees, Equinox Hotel, BBA, and the Town of Manchester. She asked Anders to make a 1 page summary to present to the above parties. French suggested using social media like facebook and the potential creation of a village facebook page to post on existing community forums and ask questions using facebook's poll features.

Review, discuss, and vote on revisions to the draft energy plan

French motioned to revise the Energy Plan Draft from April, seconded by Heilemann, passed unanimously.

Kolloff divided up the revisions into various sections for voting.

- A. ~~Section 10.5 Correctly stating that the office IS air conditioned~~
Section 10.7 Solar paragraph - stating the name of the Solar Screening Ordinance.
Paragraph after preferred sites – stating name of the Solar Screening Ordinance
 - a. MacLaurin motioned, seconded by French, passed unanimously
- B. Section 10.7 - eliminate mention of wind power development
Section 10.7 Local Constraints Act 174 - eliminate first sentence and reword the paragraph.
Section 10.7 Local Constraints – add reference to plan of development and bylaws, and insert language from the bylaws that is specific to design guidelines for the village
 - a. French motioned, seconded by MacLaurin, passed unanimously.
- C. Motions to define ground mounted solar installations as follows:
Section 10.7 – Local Constraints – vote on definition of ground mounted solar panels. Are they structures subject to historic design restrictions in the Historic Core and Preservation Sub Districts or are they utilities which are subject to screening and siting as are other building utilities?
Motion to define ground mounted solar installations as new construction which must adhere to design restrictions stated in the plan of development and bylaws conforming to required 19th and early 20th century design aesthetics.
Motion to define ground mounted solar installations as utilities which must be sited and screened as are other utilities and conform to the Solar Screening Ordinance.
If ground mounted solar installations are defined as new construction which must adhere to design restrictions stated in the plan of development and bylaws conforming to required 19th and early 20th design aesthetics, they would not conform to those requirements.
Motion to prohibit ground mounted solar installations in the Historic Core and Preservation Sub Districts.
 - a. After a long debate to define ground-mounted solar installations as structures vs. utilities, and a request by French to have an expert define the words “structure” and “utility” as they apply in this context, the voting on this specific set of revisions is to be postponed.
- D. Motion to approve revisions as follows:
Section 10.7 Solar – revisions of bullet points which define preferred sites, state that roof mounted solar panels adhere to Solar Screening Ordinance and simplify parking lot canopy bullet point.
Section 10.7 Paragraph following bullet points – revised to include adherence to the Solar Screening Ordinance, language specified and phrasing of preferred site land parcels.
Section 10.7 Wind – relocate phrase about reassessing current policies as technology evolves.
 - a. MacLaurin motioned, seconded by French, passed unanimously.

- E. Motion to approve revisions as follows:
 - Section 10.7 Solar and Wind Siting and prohibited areas paragraphs - eliminate mention of wind power siting, as it was comprehensively dealt with in previous paragraph.
 - Section 10.7 Design Control Districts – correction of Solar Screening Ordinance name, and elimination of reference to wind power development for same reasons as above.
 - a. French motioned, seconded by Heilemann, passed unanimously.
- F. Motion to approve revisions as follows:
 - Section 10.8- Municipal leadership and land use planning - points 1,2 and 3 re-written, based on feedback from BOT
 - Section 10.8 - Transportation - points 7 and 9 re-written based on feedback from BOT
 - a. Waller motioned, seconded by Heilemann, passed unanimously.
- G. Motion to approve map note revisions as follows:
 - Figure 10 Map: Local constraints - added language to conform to Solar Screening Ordinance. Preferred sites - eliminates reference to utility scale development.
 - Figure 11 Map: Local constraints - added language to conform to Solar Screening Ordinance. Preferred sites paragraph is re-written.
 - Figure 12 Map: Local constraints - re-written to state that there is no suitable location for wind development.
 - a. MacLaurin motioned, seconded by French, passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 1:22 P.M.