



# Village of Manchester, Vermont

## Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission Held August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 10:45am

**Members Present:** Chair Audrey Kolloff, Vice-Chair Rich Heilemann, Anthony MacLaurin, Christie Bronstein, Renee Waller, Tom Scarnecchia

**Member(s) Absent:** Eric Dorsch

**Others Present:** Zoning Administrative Officer Curan VanDerWielen, Treasurer Donald Brodie, Cat Bryars

The meeting was held both in person at the Village Office and via zoom.

Chair Audrey Kolloff called the meeting to order at 10:48am.

### **Minutes:**

*Approve the draft minutes of the July 20th, 2022, meeting.*

Kolloff began by introducing the July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022 regular meeting minutes before asking whether any Commissioners had comment. Tom Scarnecchia commented that he had been present at the meeting, despite being marked absent on the draft minutes. VanDerWielen commented that it appeared he had been marked absent as he had come in after the meeting had started, and that he would correct the minutes to reflect Scarnecchia's attendance. Rich Heilemann commented that he believed VanDerWielen had mentioned that before the meeting had begun. Renee Waller commented that she believed VanDerWielen had done a good job on the minutes. Waller then motioned to approved the meeting minutes with the suggested change. Heilemann seconded Waller's motion. The meeting minutes were then unanimously approved by the Commission.

### **Planned Business:**

*Election of Officers*

Kolloff began by stating that Heilemann had offered to be considered for the role of Chair. Scarnecchia then nominated Heilemann. Several others attempted to nominate Heilemann near-simultaneously at this time before VanDerWielen stated that Scarnecchia had already nominated Heilemann. Kolloff then too stated she wished to nominate Heilemann before stating that she wished to offer to be considered for Vice-Chair. Heilemann then nominated Kolloff for the position of Vice-Chair. Anthony MacLaurin seconded Heilemann's nomination. Kolloff then asked if there were any other nominations before the Commission moved to vote. Kolloff then commenced voting on the role of Chair, to which Heilemann was elected unanimously. Kolloff then commenced voting on the role of Vice-Chair, to which Kolloff was elected unanimously.

### *Other Business*

Kolloff then began to discuss the transition from the present meeting to that of the public hearing, scheduled directly afterward. Scarnecchia expressed surprise that the meeting had not been warned on the website ahead of time. MacLaurin commented that it should have been notified on the email list. Scarnecchia then commented that he wanted to bring this up, as the Village maintained the website and needed to be using it consistently to avoid confusion or frustration among the public which used it to stay informed about local government. Scarnecchia then stated he was confused as posting seemed a very simple task to complete. VanDerWielen stated that he agreed with Scarnecchia, before commenting that both he and the Board of Trustees was very aware of a myriad of shortcomings associated with the present website layout and that it was in the process of being resolved. Heilemann commented that he believed the present setup for website maintenance was awkward, and that it should be handled completely in-house. VanDerWielen reiterated that the Board appeared aware of this before asking MacLaurin if he wished to speak more directly on the matter. MacLaurin commented that the Board was already exploring hiring an additional staff member, among whose duties would be to assist with website management, but that it was still to be discussed among the Board. Around this point in time, Cat Bryars entered the meeting. Kolloff, Heilemann, and Bronstein all commented at this point that they had not received an email via the email list. VanDerWielen stated that he was positive he had sent an email to the list notifying the meeting and that he would look into whether a mistake or error had been made to prevent the issue from reoccurring.

MacLaurin then stated that the outreach letter needed to go out, to which Kolloff stated Cat Bryars could comment. Heilemann then asked about the next step for the Energy Chapter after the public hearing had concluded. Bryars stated she could answer both questions. Starting with MacLaurin's comment, Bryars stated that how and why it was sent out would depend on what the Commission wished to accomplish from it. If the intent, for example, was similar to that of Dorset's recent outreach project, then it could be to ask if property owners wished to opt out of being cited as examples in the municipal Plan of Development. If, however, it was simply to notify public hearings or meetings, then it should be handled differently. Bryars concluded that the intent mattered. Scarnecchia asked whether an opt out statement was a requirement or a courtesy. Bryars indicated that the letter had been written in Dorset. Scarnecchia clarified that he was asking whether an opt out statement was required or if it was a courtesy provided in Dorset. Bryars indicated that it was an internal requirement in order to displace the burden onto property owners in case of a conflict with the Plan of Development. Bryars then stated that with this in mind, Dorset had sent the statement to property owners. Scarnecchia commented that as a property owner in the Village, he would have liked to have had a chance to opt out. Heilemann stated that there was an option to opt out, but notice was not obligatory in the Village on that item. Bryars asked if there were any other questions on this.

Bryars then moved on to discuss Heilemann's question on next steps following the public hearing for the Energy Chapter. Bryars stated that after the Chapter had been adopted then there were no further municipal requirements. The next step would be passed to the Bennington County Regional

Commission (BCRC), which would check for compliance with a form filed by BCRC for both the Energy Chapter and changes to the Plan of Development regarding Act 174. Bryars then indicated this form would be completed by BCRC staff. Bryars continued, stating that a ballot would then be presented to BCRC representatives for a vote to approve or not approve each Plan with the staff reviews as reference. Bryars stated that the general timeline was for the Chapter to be finished in August, balloted in September, and voted on proper on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Bryars indicated she was confident that it would be settled by September of this year. Kolloff asked whether a public hearing hosted by the Board of Trustees was needed. Bryars stated that it was projected that the public hearing would occur after the Commission's public hearing, although this would not change the BCRC review unless the Board made a major change to the document. Bryars indicated that this would likely result in an appeal, although she predicted that this would be unlikely. Kolloff stated that she hoped no major changes would be made as it had already been approved and reviewed by the Board prior to the present meeting. Heilemann then commented that it was past 11:00am and at least three members of the public were present, meaning it may be appropriate to end the meeting and start the public hearing.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was closed *de facto* at 11:04am, as Chair Kolloff began the Public Hearing.

The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022, at 11:00am.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Curan VanDerWielen, Zoning Administrative Officer