

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION
Friday, November 18, 2022, 12:00pm

MINUTES

Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89339717735>

Meeting ID: 893 3971 7735

Members Present: Jaci Allen, Brian Loeb, Ernie Ciccotelli, Melissa Horwitz, Vince Crow
Members Absent: Jeff Goodrich, Marc Aquila
Public Present: Linda Cook, Stuart Richards, Charlotte Metcalf, Jaan Laaspere, Mary Gorman
Staff:

Meeting Opened: 12:03pm

1. Approve Agenda:

Ciccotelli stated that we should have discussed the subject of this meeting earlier and would like more information to prepare properly. The Chair emphasized the purpose of this special meeting was to communicate with the group on unexpected events over the past two weeks. Loeb moved and Crow seconded a motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried 4-1. For: Allen, Loeb, Horwitz, Crow. Against: Ciccotelli

2. Public Comment:

Stuart Richards stated that he does not like that this meeting is during the day and during normal working hours. He also stated that he doesn't think the town should be spending money on studies like the Density Study and the Wastewater Study. Both studies were grant funded. He also stated that he does not want the PC to encourage speeding up the growth of the town. Mary Gorman stated that this special meeting was rushed and last minute.

3. Current Status of Projects

Allen discussed the recent resignation of Aaron DeNamur, Planning and Zoning Coordinator and implications. In accordance with 24 VSA 4448, the Planning Commission will nominate an acting administrative officer and ask the Selectboard to approve. Until an acting administrative officer is appointed, building permits will be in limbo. Allen is investigating the possibility of a part-time contract employee from Two Rivers Regional Planning Commission and will report back on availability.

The absence of staff support is having additional impacts. The Town withdrew from the State program that was funding the Wastewater Study. Other projects on hold include updates to the 2009 Land Use Regulations, a master plan for sidewalks, trails and bike paths, and the Community Rating System certification process, which impacts the State reimbursement level in the event of another major flooding event.

Allen reported the deadline is fast approaching for the next step in the grant application process to evaluate a parcel of Town-owned land near the Transfer Station as a potential site for several units of affordable housing. The Affordable Housing Sub-committee and Planning Commission flagged this opportunity to the Selectboard earlier this year. TRORC has agreed to administer the grant on the town's behalf. Pending Selectboard support, the Affordable Housing Sub-committee and Planning Commission will meet jointly on 11/28 to complete the next step in the application process.

Allen and Ciccotelli recommended recent training they attended by TRORC on protecting Forest Blocks. A link to the webinar will be sent out as soon as it becomes available.

The Norwich Historic Society has initiated a strategic planning process and have reached out to request input at a future meeting.

4. Input on PC annual report

Allen stated this report is a routine exercise which describes Planning Commission work during the last year. Staff has completed this task in the past. In the absence of staff, Allen received a request this week to complete the report. A draft will be sent out in the packet for the next meeting.

5. Future Meeting Schedule, and Agenda

Loeb recommended a special meeting on 11/28 in concert with AHSC on grant application
Review draft of annual report due 11/28
TRORC feedback and next steps on acting administrative officer

The Commission agreed to hold a special meeting on 11/28 to address these time-sensitive topics.

6: Public Comment

Stuart Richards questioned why the density study stated the town's development is too slow and is concerned the PC wanted too much. He also stated that he appreciated the town employees and volunteers.

Meeting adjourned 1pm

Future Meetings:

Monday, November 28, 6:30pm, Special Meeting

Respectfully submitted,
Vincent Crow

APPROVED 11-28-2022