

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION
Thursday, August 27, 2020 6:30pm

MINUTES

Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86340389705>

Meeting ID: 863 4038 9705

Members Present: Melissa Horwitz (C), Brian Loeb, Jaci Allen, Jeff Goodrich, Ernie Ciccotelli, Jeff Lubell, Leah Romano

Public Present: Linda Cook, Stuart Richards, Jack Cushman, Linda Cook, Chris Katucki, Lisa Close, Roger Arnold, Claudette Brochu

Staff: Rod Francis

Meeting Opened: 6:34pm

1. Approve Agenda
Goodrich moved and Allen seconded a motion to approve the Agenda. Motion carried: 7 – 0
2. Meeting Objectives:
 - o Discussion of Open Meeting Law
 - o Discuss status of Wastewater Working Group and other working groups
 - o Discuss Affordable Housing Subcommittee Recruitment and Charter
3. Comments from the Public. None
4. Review and approve Minutes July 23, 2020
Allen moved and Goodrich seconded a motion to approve the minutes of July 23, 2020. Motion carried 7 – 0.
5. Announcements, Reports, Updates & Correspondence
 - o Correspondence
 - i. VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program email forwarded by Linda Gray.

Goodrich added that there was a study on extending the bike path from Hartford to Norwich some years ago that did not result in a physical project which could be worth reviewing/reviving
 - o Updates
 - i. Municipal Planning Grant 2021 Application Guidelines

Francis led the Commission through a discussion of four possible application ideas:
 - i) Village Wastewater Solutions Study
 - ii) Norwich Subdivision Regulations; Review of Density Standards
 - iii) Fair/Affordable Housing Review
 - iv) a Municipal Facilities Review

Lubell moved and Goodrich seconded a motion to request that the Planning Director prepare a draft application for consideration by the Commission for a September 10 meeting of the Commission. Motion carried 7 – 0.

- Reports
 - i. Allen reported out on the Town Plan Action Items that have been circulated to the responsible Commission/Board for inclusion in their workplans.

6. Violation of Open Meeting Law and steps to be taken to ‘cure’ them: Francis acknowledged that based on guidance from the Secretary of State’s office ([A Guide to Open Meetings](#), Revised January, 2019). that the activities of the Waste Water Working Group are subject to Open Meeting Law. This includes noticing meetings, keeping minutes of meetings and making them available to the public.

The process of ‘curing’ such a violation is to:

- Acknowledge the violation
- Move to capture the output of any entity that fits the broader definition of “public body”
- Establish any such output as part of the public record
- Make decisions and adopt processes to ensure ongoing compliance with 1VSA §310

The Wastewater Working Group met on August 26, at a duly noticed meeting to form a public record of the groups output and make a recommendation to the planning commission as to its future.

Lubell moved and Loeb seconded a motion that the Planning Commission affirms that any ‘action’ taken by the Wastewater Working Group in any unnoticed meeting is void. Motion carried 6 – 1.

Lubell moved and Allen seconded a motion that the Planning Commission affirms that any ‘action’ taken in any unnoticed meeting of the Affordable Housing Subcommittee Working Groups is void. Motion carried 6 – 0 – 1.

7. Dissolving the Wastewater Working Group and other working groups: Commissioners discussed the need for continuing important work on the wastewater issue and the best approach in the future,

Loeb moved and Allen seconded a motion to dissolve the Wastewater Working Group. Motion carried 5 – 2.

Lubell updated the Commission on the Affordable Housing Subcommittee’s decision at its last meeting to dissolve the three working groups (Policy, Education/Outreach and Fundraising/Land).

Allen moved and Lubell seconded a motion to acknowledge the Affordable Housing Subcommittee's decision to dissolve the working groups (Policy, Education/Outreach and Fundraising/Land). Motion carried 6 - 1.

8. Discuss Affordable Housing Subcommittee Recruitment and Charter: Lubell gave a brief description of the work that needs to be done.
9. Other Business. (None)
10. Future Meeting Schedule & Agendas
 - Review draft of MPG application
 - Tom Candon MCS board re wastewater
11. Comments from the Public: Roger Arnold (Selectboard) informed the meeting that the Selectboard was working with the Town Manager to ensure that there was helpful training on Open Meeting Law and that hopefully this could facilitate the formation of OML compliant working groups.

Meeting Adjourned 8:10pm

Future Meetings:

Thursday September 10, 6:30pm Special Meeting (review draft of MPG application)

Respectfully submitted,

Rod Francis

APPROVED 9-10-2020