

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 23, 2019, Tracy Hall

Members Present: Jaci Allen (Chair), Jeff Goodrich (V-Chair), Melissa Horwitz (Clerk), Ernie Ciccotelli, Leah Romano, Brian Loeb (by phone), Steve Thoms, Jeff Lubell

Members Not Present: Susan Brink

Public: Linda Gray

Staff: Rod Francis

Jaci Allen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

1. Approve Agenda
 - a. Goodrich moved and Thoms seconded that item 8 (election of office holders) be moved to item 5. Motion failed: 3 — 4 — 1
 - b. Lubell moved and Thoms seconded to approve the agenda as published. Motion carried: 7 — 1
2. Meeting Objectives:
 - a. Review report from Dartmouth students on accessory dwelling units
 - b. Work through Town Plan chapter links
 - c. Review calendar of June-August Town Plan feedback events
Elect Officeholders: Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk
3. Comments from the Public – none
4. Report from Dartmouth students on accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
Emily Schneider and Paulimo Rao presented on their research on ADUs in Norwich
5. Discuss composite of feedback gathered on Town Plan and work through chapter links (Francis)
Francis explained the objective of this exercise was to compare and contrast feedback gained from small group meetings across working groups with two things:
 - i) Policies, objectives and actions from 2018 chapters (as edited for relevance)
 - ii) Feedback gathered from other subject area expertsThe objective is to highlight common issues (across chapters) and any contradictions that may arise

Housing

1. Possible interest in responses such as Tiny house communities to address a specific group or need as a solution the housing crisis (i.e. Veterans)? (i.e. Upper Valley Housing Coalition “Irene Cottage” etc.)
2. There is a housing crisis (lack of appropriate housing available to suit the financial capacity and needs of many different households)
3. Energy efficient housing (EEWG recommends a code enforcement approach)
4. Supply of (more) affordable and suitably located housing depends on resolving the question of connecting to neighboring towns waste-water treatment systems and/or changes to VT septic waste-water permitting procedures

Economic Development

5. Cell phone service
6. Lack of sewer capacity (see 4 above)

7. Labor market is directly impacted by-lack of affordable housing (see above)
8. Viable taxi/ride share service
9. Could the town facilitate the local and VT permitting process for businesses start-up or expansion?
10. Tax increment financing
11. Diversify economy away from dependence on Dartmouth College and DHMC

Utilities, Facilities and Services

12. Housing challenges (see above)
13. Sewer capacity (see above)
14. Merge the fire district (responsible for potable water supply and hydrants in the village area) with the town
15. Update the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Transportation

16. Many (local) bridges are in poor condition
17. The cost of maintaining paved versus unpaved roads could be looked at
18. Advanced Transit — proposes to expand hours potentially including Saturday, to increase downtown Norwich to downtown Hanover every ½ hour. A bike rack is to be added near a bus stop

Land Use/Natural and Historic Resources

19. Habitats for wildlife
20. Wetlands maintenance
21. Ridgelines
22. Disaster mitigation
23. More forthcoming from Conservation Commission
24. Historic Preservation Commission gave explicit support for improving/extending sidewalks (while not impacting streetscape by increasing road width)

6. Review calendar of June-August Town Plan feedback events, including the postcard mailing (soliciting feedback for plan)
 - a. Leah compiled ideas
 - b. There is the offer of establishing a reading list at library
 - i. Possible movie night at library (kids over 8) for childcare to facilitate parent involvement in plan process
 - c. Affordable housing—public forum
 - d. Conference call or go to meeting during the lunch hour on town plan topics
 - e. Invite people to make a comment
 - f. Small group discussions initial meetings (documenting outreach to date)
 - g. Postcard—Must go out by July—Brian and Leah will work on it
 - i. Press release for June—3 events in June
 - h. Education “*the sooner the better*”—Second Thursday of June (Thoms to lead)
 - i. By next Friday (5/31) — Each work group please suggest the format of your small group and preferred date—can be broad —Rod and Leah
7. Review and approve Minutes of 4-25-19
 - a. Lubell moved and Thoms seconded to approve the minutes of April 25, 2019 as amended. Motion Carried 7 — 0 — 1
8. Elect Officeholders: Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk

- a. Chair: Two nominations from the floor i) Allen, ii) Ciccotelli
 - i. Horwitz moved and Romano seconded motion to nominate Allen for position of Chair.
Motion passes 5 — 3
- b. Vice-Chair Two nominations from the floor i) Horwitz, ii) and Ciccotelli
 - i. Vote deferred to next meeting
- c. Clerk
By consensus it was agreed to return to the mode of having the Planning Director act as Clerk

10. Other Business - None

11. Future Meeting Schedule & Agendas

- a. Officer Election (continued)
- b. TRORC: Town Plan preparation, conformance with statute, discussion of services available, review of chapters
- c. Outreach events calendar
- d. Postcard survey
- e. Final input from subject area experts

Meeting Adjourned at 10:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rod Francis

APPROVED 6-27-19

Future Meetings:

- Thursday, June 27, 7pm Regular Meeting
- Thursday July 25, 7pm Regular Meeting
- Thursday August 22, 7pm Regular Meeting

Planning Commission Agendas & Minutes available at: <http://norwich.vt.us/planning-commission/>