

WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes

Thursday, February 24, 2005

APPROVED

PRESENT:

Members: Bob Butler, Bob Murray, Hal Ranney, Joel Baker

Staff: Steve Lotspeich

Public: Scott Rathke, Greg Bakos, VHB, Inc., Mary O'Leary, EIV Technical Services, Kate Rader, Vt. League of Women Voters

Bob Butler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Waterbury Municipal Offices.

COLBYVILLE SIDEWALK/PATH/TRAFFIC CALMING MASTER PLAN

This was the kick-off meeting for the Colbyville Sidewalk/Path/Traffic Calming Master Plan that is being funded with a donation from the developer of the Shaw's Supermarket. Greg Bakos, the project manager/engineer with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) presented VHB's overall approach to the project. He showed photos of the various areas and road segments in the project area extending from the Best Western Inn to Ben & Jerry's from south to north, and from the Community Path on the east to the residential neighborhoods to the west of Route 100. The opportunities and constraints for the different areas and connections were discussed. Mr. Bakos also presented an aerial photo of the project area. Using tracing paper, various possible sidewalk/path routes were marked and discussed. Traffic calming and other measures such as tree plantings and crosswalks were also discussed.

The following items were discussed and highlighted:

- Pedestrian access from downtown Waterbury is considered important.
- The framework for the sidewalk/path system will need to be built in phases.
- Private investment in the system will be key to getting it constructed and maintained.
- Some of the key users of the system are likely to be people staying in the inns such as tourists, teens going to work, and residents of the area.

Mary O'Leary of EIV Technical Services, the sub-consultant for the project, discussed the data that will be needed for the base mapping for the project including parcel and landowner information. The various transportation and land use studies that have been done for the Colbyville will be considered by the consultant team. The municipality will make all this information available.

A public input meeting was set up for Thursday, March 24th at 7:00 p.m. at the Thatcher Brook Primary School. Various community members were identified as resources and possible members of the Project Advisory Committee. They will all be contacted and invited to the public input meeting.

DISCUSSION WITH KATE RADER OF THE VT. LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Kate Rader with the League of Women Voters of Central Vermont provided an overview of the activities of the League of Women Voters including voter services and advocacy for citizen participation in government. The League is interested in promoting coordinated planning between the communities in our region. The League has observed that most of the growth in our

region is occurring in towns surrounding Barre and Montpelier. The League is concerned about how that growth is being managed and coordinated between the various communities in the region. They have identified housing, open space, traffic, and economic development as their key areas of concern.

The role of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) was discussed. It was observed that the CVRPC provides a considerable amount of technical assistance to communities, especially those that do not have planning staff. Ms. Rader expressed her thanks for having the opportunity to talk to the Planning Commission about the League's concerns.

WATERBURY COMMUNITY FAIR

The logistics of preparing for the Community Fair were discussed. Hal Ranney, Rebecca Ellis, and Joel Baker plan to attend the Fair and will staff the Planning Commission table/display.

RIDGELINE/HILLSIDE/STEEP SLOPES (RHS) PROJECT

The Planning Commission discussed the latest draft of the Viewshed Map prepared by the consultant Landworks. It was agreed to recommend that the viewshed area should include all the areas above 1,000' in elevation.

The regulatory review process for structures in the viewshed area was discussed. Preservation of the aesthetics of these areas was the key concern voiced. The possibility of a two-tiered permit process was discussed. This approach would require a relatively simple administrative process for reviewing and permitting individual single-family homes. The review could be handled by the Zoning Administrator. A basic checklist of subjective requirements would be used for reviewing permit applications. The key elements of the checklist would include the following:

- Screening of structures using retained trees and landscaping.
- A prohibition on building houses and other structures on slopes greater than 25%.
- The minimization of clearing wooded areas along private roads and driveways.

A booklet of design guidelines would be given to the applicant as well with suggestions for how to site buildings, selection of building materials and colors, and the preservation of wildlife habitat.

A more comprehensive review process would be developed for subdivisions and the construction of more than one house and the process would involve board review by the Planning Commission or Zoning board of Adjustment.

MINUTES

The Planning Commission members reviewed the minutes of January 27, 2005.

MOTION: Bob Murray moved and Hal Ranney seconded the motion:

The Planning Commission approves the minutes of January 27, 2005, as amended.

VOTE: Members of the Planning Commission voted unanimously to carry the motion with no abstentions.

PLANNER'S REPORT

Steve Lotspeich reported that Tom and Tracy Bryant's project for the restaurant/café at Maxie and Margery Irish's property on N. Main St. was approved by the Village Zoning Board of Adjustment and the zoning permit was issued. Permitting activity has been slow and Mr. Lotspeich will give a detailed Zoning Administrator's Report at the next Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Lotspeich distributed copies of the Planning Commissioners Journal.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Lotspeich, Community Planner