

WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION
Approved Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 8, 2016

Planning Commission: Chair: Ken Belliveau, Sarah McShane, Rebecca Washburn

Staff: Steve Lotspeich, Community Planner; Judi Byron, Secretary

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. at the Municipal Center at 28 N. Main St.

AGENDA REVIEW AND MODIFICATIONS

There were no changes made to the agenda.

COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC

There was no public present.

DISCUSS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT STUDY FOR VILLAGE OF WATERBURY

Steve handed out the base maps developed by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. Six maps were presented: The Steep Slopes, The Utilities and Facilities, The Historic Districts, The Significant Natural Resources, The Land Use/Land Cover, and Zoning. Steve wants to add in the 100 year flood plain and queried the PC as to where it might best be represented. Ken pointed out that the Natural Resources and Steep Slopes maps are a logical choice.

Ken pointed out that the village boundary represented by the pale yellow line was not easy to see and recommended a 3 or 4 point heavy bold black or other strong color for visibility. Sarah pointed out that we should be able to tell the difference between the village and the town.

Steve said the next step would be the synthesis of all the maps in context with each other and was open to suggestions to come up with a map that shows areas more suitable for intense development. Ken asked what the selection criteria are; what makes a piece of land desirable or undesirable for village expansion or annexation?

Steve then went through each map.

1. The Steep Slopes. The 10-15% slope was added. The previous draft of the map showed slopes 16% and greater which made the remaining areas seem flatter than they are. This now shows finer detail. Blush Hill is a good example of development on steeper slopes, though it is better to have more intense development on less steep slopes. Steve pointed to the fact that when the LiDar mapping is available in a year or two, the contours will be much more accurate and it will be possible to generate a more refined steep slopes map.
2. The Public Utilities and Facilities Map identifies parcels currently tied into the utility systems. Ken pointed out rather than map who is connected, define the parameters for future growth, hence a growth boundary concept can result. Steve will have a conversation with Bill Woodruff and the Sewer Commissioners about this approach.
3. The Historic Districts Map was determined to be accurate enough for the purpose of this study.

4. The Natural Resources Map has all soils that are prime and of statewide significance. The definition of Significant Natural Resources in the Zoning Regulations includes the prime agricultural soils and does not include those of statewide significance. However Act 250 regulates both categories of soils. Becca pointed out that the rivers, lakes and ponds are still buried under other colored layers. Ken recommended the topmost layer be the political boundary, then the road layer and the rivers and streams layer below that. The question was asked what the difference was between conserved land and publicly state owned land. It was agreed to depict both types of land that do not have development potential and are considered “conserved” land. There will be a public meeting in September where this information will be important.
5. The Land Use/Land Cover Map though cleaned up still has some inaccuracies, specifically the northeast corner and wetlands layer. Road names need to be added or corrected. Steve answered Ken’s query regarding the criteria for residential status as simply the photo determination of what was being picked up showing higher density in red. Steve recommended taking it on a parcel by parcel basis regarding what can be developed and what cannot. Steve also agreed to get definitions for terms, i.e. what is “outdoor recreation” or “commercial service” etc.
6. The Zoning Map Steve took the online parcel data, the zoning districts, and the overlay district and made a composite for the Town and Village. The keys are consistent with the online zoning map. Steve confirmed that the zoning regulations are unified and consistent between town and village.

Steve explained that the next step is to look at potential areas of higher density development that is non-flood plain, non-wetland, and is in areas with slopes that are less than 15%. He suggested a field trip to look at these areas and see the reality in the field.

Becca suggested having members of the public that are interested and may have experience come in as the PC is looking at a comprehensive rewrite of our subdivision regulations.

Ken pointed to the issue of infrastructure: “the sky is not the limit”. The Town and Village would be well advised to figure out the infrastructure for service. Traffic currently is a huge issue. There are constraints for land in flood plains, in wetlands, in areas with steep slopes. It was agreed to discuss prime agricultural lands and lands of statewide significance at a later date.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rebecca Washburn moved and Sarah McShane seconded the motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes of July 11th with corrections.

Vote: Passed unanimously.

Sarah McShane moved and Rebecca Washburn seconded the motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes of July 25th with corrections.

Vote: Passed unanimously.

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION PILOT PROJECT

There is grant funding to map the river corridor for flood plain management. Steve explained there are two components to the project:

1. To develop the methodology for creating maps; taking the existing statewide Phase I river corridor data, refining it and mapping it.
2. Meeting with the community and looking at these areas.

Dan Currier, a member of the town and village's Floodplain Management Working Group, would like to do this in Waterbury as part of the pilot project. The three criteria for areas to exclude would be existing encroachment (i.e. the village) and state and municipal roads which naturally creates a barrier to the river corridor.

The PC questioned both the short time frame (wrapping it up by the end of the year) and its priority. The consensus was having a more accurate river corridor map would be a nice resource and would be useful from a policy and regulatory perspective. However, the concern was with staff resources and Steve's availability. Steve pointed out that one option would be to develop the river corridors regulations as part of the municipal planning rewrite of the zoning regulations. It was agreed the PC would not take action at the present time.

OTHER BUSINESS

Steve presented the Zoning Administrator's Report from July 26th to August 8th which was discussed.

There will be a 5th anniversary commemoration of Tropical Storm Irene on Sunday, August 28th.

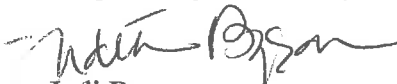
Steve gave an update of the State permitting activity, mentioning the multi-use development on the northeast corner of Guptil Road and Route 100.

The CVRPC adopted the regional plan update on July 12th effective August 16th.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judi Byron
Secretary

