

WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION
Unapproved Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 13, 2017

Planning Commission: Ken Belliveau, Chair; Becca Washburn, Mary Koen, Sarah McShane

Staff: Steve Lotspeich, Community Planner

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 to the agenda.

COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC

There were no members of the public at the meeting to provide comments.

REVIEW DRAFT APPLICATION FOR A DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION FUND GRANT

Steve Lotspeich presented the proposed grant application that would fund the design and construction of wayfinding kiosks and signs, and period lighting on Stowe St. The project will be done in conjunction with the reconstruction of Main St. A concern was raised regarding the adequacy of the grant period since the Main St. reconstruction project will be done over a 2-3 year timeframe starting next year. The grant will have a 30-month time period that can be extended with approval from the State of Vermont so that timeframe should be adequate to accomplish the project.

An additional concern was expressed that the Planning Commission should be involved earlier in the process of developing these grant applications when their recommendation is needed before the application goes to the Select Board for approval. The Planning Commission would like to be involved in the separate project to have the kiosks and signs designed by a consultant this spring.

MOTION:

Becca Washburn moved to recommend the submission of the Downtown Transportation Fund grant application and authorized Ken Belliveau to sign the Resolution for the application on behalf of the Planning Commission.

VOTE:

The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING GRANT – REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND CONSULTANT SELECTION

The Commission discussed the three submittals of qualifications that were received for the Municipal Planning Grant project to re-write certain Articles in the Zoning Regulations. The submittals were from LandWorks, Orion Planning and Design, and Place Sense. Regarding Orion Planning & Design, concern was raised that the firm is based in California, even though they do a large amount of planning work in New England. Their hourly rate is significantly

higher than the other two firms resulting in fewer hours that could be devoted to the project. The submittal indicates that a lot is expected from the Planning Commission. Orion Planning & Design also proposed to do the Campaign Plan that is part of the project before executing a contract with the Town which is problematic.

Regarding the submittal from LandWorks, concern was raised that David Raphael is the point person attending all the meetings, yet the majority of the writing will be done by the Planner and Planning Associate with LandWorks and those staff members do not appear to be scheduled to attend any of the meetings. The Planner, Natalie Steen, is well qualified to do the work however Sarah Pelkey has a B.A. in Psychology and a Minor in Sociology and has limited formal training in the planning field. She does have a significant amount of experience in planning.

Regarding the submittal from Place Sense, Brandy Saxton is a Landscape Architect and Certified Planner and is very well qualified to do the work. She also has a significant amount of experience drafting zoning regulations for Vermont municipalities. Place Sense was the consultant hired by the Town of Waterbury with a Municipal Planning Grant in 2013, to assist with the re-write of the Municipal Plan. The submittal has very little information regarding carrying out public opinion surveys though Brandy did assist with the survey done as part of the Waterbury Municipal Plan re-write and it was generally well done. Concern was raised about the amount of consultant “face time” with the Planning Commission. Even though the Request for Qualifications did not include the submittal of an approach to the project, the scope of the work and having an adequate amount of meeting time with the Planning Commission would need to be incorporated in a contract.

A general discussion regarding the project followed. It was agreed that the zoning re-write needs to reflect the goals, objectives, and actions in the Municipal Plan. Additional input will be needed from community members and the Development Review Board. It will also be important to get direction on certain aspects of the re-write from the elected officials.

The Commission would like to further define the scope of the project and get input from the Development Review Board prior to hiring the consultant. The areas where DRB input will be especially helpful include site plan, conditional use, and design review, and aspects of the ridgeline/hillside/steep slope review criteria and process. It will also be important to get input from the Zoning Administrator including what the focus of the re-write should include, and a list of the detailed edits that have been compiled by the Planning Department.

MOTION:

Mary Koen moved and Sarah McShane seconded the motion to recommend that the Town contract with Place Sense to work with the Planning Commission on the re-write of the Zoning Regulations in accordance with the Request for Qualifications and the submittal by Place Sense dated February 1, 2017.

VOTE:

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION:

Mary Koen moved and Sarah McShane seconded the motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes for December 12, 2016 as drafted.

VOTE: The motion was approved with a vote of 4-0

MOTION:

Becca Washburn moved and Sarah McShane seconded the motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes for January 9, 2017 as drafted.

VOTE: The motion was approved with a vote of 4-0

PLANNER'S & ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORTS

1. The Zoning Administrator's report for the month of January was handed out and discussed.
2. There were no additional Planner's items discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Lotspeich
Community Planner

Next meeting: February 27, 2017