

~~Draft Minutes~~

**Middlesex Planning Commission
Wednesday, September 19, 2018
6:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915**

Planning Commission Members Present

Steven Martin, Chair
Barry Bolio
Sandy Levine
Mitch Osiecki
Troy Sumner

Guests

Mike Pelchar – Planetary Matters
Alan Newman – Planetary Matters
Russ Bennett – Planetary Matters
Nick Charyk – All Earth Rail
Debra Sachs – Net Zero Vermont

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.

New Business

Welcome of Guests.

Russ Bennett, speaking on behalf of Planetary Matters, explained that they closed on the purchase of the former Champlain Oil gas station recently. While no plans for the site have been determined as yet, the Planetary Matters group has been intrigued by the idea of reestablishing a train station in Middlesex. Mitch noted that that a rail siding is currently allowed as a conditional use in the village district.

Russ explains that Nick's organization, All Earth Rail, has purchased a fleet of small, self-propelled rail cars intended to make commuter rail service to rural communities financially viable. All Earth Rail is also supportive of the concept of reestablishing train stations in smaller communities like ours.

Building on a vision shared with the Planning Commission after closing on the Camp Meade site earlier this year, the PM group has continued to explore the possibility of transforming the area into a streetscape. This streetscape concept aims to use traffic-calming measures in order to help transform the area from a "pass-through" into a destination. The PM team is offering resources and is interested in supporting a grant application to study the feasibility of a streetscape project for the village.

With apologies for the short notice on this proposal, Russ explains that they've presented their proposal to the Selectboard, which expressed its support for the idea. The grant that would support this feasibility study has an application deadline of Monday, October 1 (hence the rushed schedule).

Russ adds that Planetary Matters has had some preliminary discussions about this grant with JB Hinds of Birchline Planning LLC. Because of the extremely tight window, JB has offered to assist the PC in getting this application prepared and submitted before the deadline.

Sandy moves that the Planning Commission apply for this grant. Barry seconds. Motion unanimously approved.

Sandy expresses the hope that if the grant application is successful, the scope might be expanded slightly to do additional town planning. The observation is made that this grant could also tie in to proposals that might spring from the "What's Next Middlesex" forum coming up next month.

Guests depart meeting.

Mitch apprises the rest of the PC of a situation which might present a zoning violation. Nicholas Hecht recently purchased the lots containing the old train station and a storage building. A deed and survey were filed with the town's land records, but a permit application for a subdivision was not applied for. Mitch is continuing to research this issue, but it is possible that a subdivision is required to split the acquired parcels from the rest of the property owned by the railroad.

Old Business

At its September meeting, the ZBA approved the KCOS conditional use permit. Release of formal finding is pending. The ZBA decision included one condition, namely that should the facility subsequently be sold, the new owners would be compelled to continue to operate the facility as a sustainable, organic operation.

The observation is made that the existing septic permit allows for up to 60 employees. Approval of the subdivision permit should include a provision ensuring that total staff at the two facilities does not exceed 60 employees.

Discussion of the 10 General Standards elements of the site plan review.

1. Site features – no concerns

2. Access – no concerns
3. Circulation – no concerns
4. Parking, Loading, Service & Outdoor Storage – no outdoor storage at facility
5. Layout & Site Design – no concerns
6. Landscaping & Screening – no concerns. Intention is that the facility maintains a low profile.
7. Storm Water Management & Erosion Control – we should somehow ensure that the facility adheres to sound storm water management practices. Site should maintain storm water security to ensure no direct runoff of storm water from development to neighboring properties.
8. Lighting – no concerns
9. Bylaws in effect – no concerns
10. Sign requirements – no concerns. VPA has indicated facility will have no prominent signage.

Jim Gallagher has submitted additional water sample tests. The PC does not have review authority over water samples.

PUD Review

- (A) Purpose -- our findings ought to highlight that one or more of the seven objectives of a PUD are being addressed by this project, for example, (4) provide for flexibility of lot layout.
- (B) Review Procedures – our findings ought to include a statement reiterating that the project does not include any proposed modifications, changes or supplements to requirements of these regulations.


Energy Use

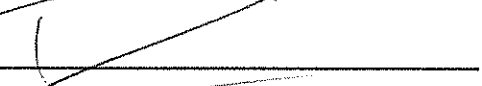
In accordance with chapter 7 of the town plan, we recognize the facility will use a lot of electricity and encourage the occupants to work with the utility and Efficiency Vermont to explore ways to reduce energy use.

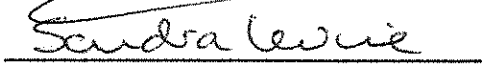
Troy moves to approve subdivision request, subject to conditions discussed. Sandy seconds. Motion carries unanimously.

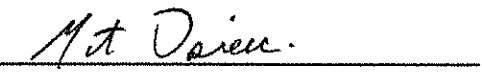
Barry moves to adjourn. Troy seconds. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Steven Martin 

Barry Bolio 

Sandra Levine 

Mitch Osiecki 

Troy Sumner _____