

Draft Minutes

Meeting of the Middlesex Planning Commission
Wednesday, March 16, 2022
6:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, VT 05602

This meeting was conducted remotely using the town's Zoom account.

Planning Commission Members

Sandy Levine
Theo Kennedy
Mitch Osiecki
Nicole D'Agostino
Jon Leibowitz - absent

Guests:

Clare Rock, CVRPC
Kevin Thompson, ZA
Elias Gardner, resident
Marge Dethloff, resident
Dayton Crites, DuBois & King
Julia Ursaki, DuBois & King

Call to Order

Chair Sandy Levine called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Roll Call: Sandy Levine, Theo Kennedy, Mitch Osiecki and Nicole D'Agostino were present. Jon Leibowitz was absent.

Sandy made introductions and welcomed guests to the meeting.

Organizational Matters:

Theo moved that Sandy be re-appointed as chair. Mitch seconded. **Vote to approve: 4-0-0.**

Theo moved to table the appointment of a vice-chair. Mitch seconded. **Vote to approve: 4-0-0.**

Theo moved to re-appoint Mitch as secretary. Nicole seconded. **Vote to approve: 4-0-0.**

Mitch moved to designate the third Wednesday of each month as our meeting date. Theo seconded.
Vote to approve: 4-0-0.

Old Business:

Zoning Regulation Updates

Putnamville

Historically, Putnamville has been designated a village zoning district, with the same development standards as the Middlesex Village. We are anticipating allowing somewhat higher density and smaller setback standards in Middlesex Village. We've heard feedback from Putnamville residents that they like the current standards and do not favor increased lot density.

Question: what/where is Putnamville, exactly?

Response: Putnamville is the small cluster of parcels along Route 12 – approximately a dozen or so parcels. Confirmed: a zoning map was shared, showing the Putnamville village zoning district consists of all or part of perhaps 16 lots and 13 dwellings.

Theo commented that he would like to make sure that in the future a Village Center designation is a viable option to pursue, should Putnamville residents wish to do so.

Question: Nicole asked for clarification of why zoning regulations are being updated.

Response: Sandy explained that regulations are periodically updated for several reasons:

- To ensure compliance with state statutes;
- To clear up ambiguous or confusing language; and
- To ensure consistency with the goals of the Town Plan (which is also updated every few years).

PC members in agreement there is little support for any significant changes to zoning standards in Putnamville. Since we anticipate changes to standards in Middlesex Village, this will necessitate standards for two distinct village districts.

Mitch moved to retain current standards for the Putnamville district, other than minor revisions that might be necessary to comply with state statutes. Nicole seconded. **Vote to approve: 4-0-0.**

Other Updates

Discussion of sample tables added to draft last month. Helpful? Yes.

Clare also shared a sample of the Summary Table, which shows which type of review is required of various types of development. Currently, some development requires a site plan review in some districts, but not in others. Will want to ensure consistency. Also, should On-Farm Accessory uses always

require site plan review? ZA Kevin Thompson opined that they should. Finally, Bulk Fuel Storage does not currently appear to require site plan review. It probably should as well.

Application requirements:

Currently, Sections 5.3 and 7.2 specify a different number of copies of a sketch plan. For consistency, we should require one original and seven copies, plus an electronic copy to accompany the application.

Discussion of possibility of running one final survey for Middlesex residents to discuss zoning updates. This would be a short, six-question survey focusing on contemplated changes to:

- Flood-prone areas and the Industrial District east of Middlesex Village;
- Natural Resources & Rural areas; and
- Administrative & Process Descriptions.

Consensus was that the proposed survey is short and simple; more feedback is generally helpful. Let's post and see what we learn.

Clare shared a sample of the survey. Homework: respond to Clare no later than Friday, 3/25 with edits or comments.

We still need to meet with the Select Board to solicit feedback about a possible change from ZBA to DRB model. Sandy will set up a date, likely in early April.

Clare departed at approximately 7:05. Dayton Crites and Julia Ursaki of DuBois & King joined the meeting.

Dayton briefly discussed results of the survey conducted in conjunction with our recent Public Meeting to receive final comments on our Streetscape Scoping Study work.

The main takeaway is that streetscape elements and traffic-calming measures in the area near Camp Meade has broad support of those responding.

As a logistical matter, setting sidewalks further from the edge of the roadway offers several compelling advantages. Consensus of the PC is that the final report should express a clear preference for this design. Among the advantages: snow clearance, significant reduction in overall project cost, and opportunities for future uses.

The PC also agreed that there is little likelihood of the town being interested in assuming maintenance of the road.

Dayton also mentioned that the final plan could include some vertical elements (separating sidewalk or bike paths from roadway). We could add these to design proposals with language recognizing that such

elements are generally disfavored by VTrans, but could propose them by noting that such elements are supported by the state's "safe streets" standards.

Other Business

Project List

Updated Project List is on our Google drive location.

Correspondence

PC heard from a few residents of Putnamville, consistently supportive of leaving current zoning standards unchanged.

Energy Committee

Mitch provided a few updates of activity of the Energy Committee:

- Planning another Energy Fair, likely in mid-May, and in discussions to hold the event at Camp Meade campus;
- Energy Committee has learned of a grant opportunity that could support various renewable energy initiatives – discussing viability of applying for funding for a modest project (letter of interest due in mid-April); and
- A couple of members of the Energy Committee would like to attend a PC meeting and make a short (10 minutes or so) presentation about energy efficiency standards updated zoning regulations might support. Will invite them to attend our April meeting.

Minutes

Theo moved to approve February draft minutes. Mitch seconded. **Vote to approve: 3-0-1 (Nicole abstained).**

Mitch note that we also need to approve minutes of our Public Meeting of February 23. Will have those ready for next meeting.

Next Meetings

- April 20 – Regular monthly meeting
- April TBD – Meet with Select Board (quarterly update & discuss DRB model)

Adjournment

Nicole moved to adjourn; Theo seconded. **Vote to approve: 4-0.** Meeting adjourned at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitch Osiecki,
Planning Commission secretary