

Draft Minutes

Middlesex Planning Commission
Wednesday, April 3, 2019
6:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

Planning Commission Members Present

Elias Gardner
Theo Kennedy
Sandy Levine
Mitch Osiecki

Absent

Dick Alderman

Guests

CathyAnn Larose
Mike Pelchar
Laura Ranker
Rodney Pingree

Sandy called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

Approved minutes of our meeting on March 6. Sandy also noted that our joint meeting with the Select board on March 26, was warned as a special meeting of the PC, so we should record minutes of that meeting as well. Will prepare those in advance of our next meeting.

Old Business

Cathy distributed a new draft town plan incorporating several edits discussed last month. New in this draft is text covering chapters 3-5, much of which is quite preliminary at this stage.

Discussed additional edits and revisions to chapters 1 & 2.

New Business

Laura Ranker and Rodney Pingree of the Agency of Natural Resources joined the meeting to discuss the section of our draft town plan covering Groundwater Resources.

They explained that the state prefers that towns develop groundwater regulations proactively, rather than simply relying on the state to regulate groundwater resources. In general, citizens tend to be less receptive to regulations imposed by the state. It's often easier to get buy-in on regulations crafted by local government.

Rodney explained that the state recognizes four classes of groundwater protection. By default, a site is considered Class 3. Class 1 is the highest standard, and must be designated by the legislature. This is the toughest standard and is rarely applied in practice.

Laura shared maps of known well locations in town. A map of well locations could be incorporated into our town plan.

One of the priorities for the town would be to identify and protect public water systems (PWS). By definition, a PWS is one that provides drinking water to the public and serves an average of 25 or more people per day for at least 60 days of the year.

The state regulates the placement of private wells and septic systems, so there are built-in protections for private residences.

Laura mentioned that the Town of Brandon has established an area in their town as a PWS. We may want to consider designating an area as a possible site for a future PWS.

Current Class 2 sites in town include Rumney Elementary school and the Welch Park.

For further research, Rodney suggests visiting the ANR's web site. The department's web site includes an interactive map with multiple layers that can be used to filter out various types of sites.

Laura and Rodney left the meeting.

Old Business

The PC resumed discussion of revisions to draft town plan.

Homework for Mitch: provide Cathy with 5-year average of zoning activity.

Cathy pointed out that our town plan relies on some demographic data from the CVRPC. One complication is that the CVRPC's plan is itself out of date, more than our current town plan, in fact.

An ongoing challenge that's been noted is that our town plan includes some projected trends provided by the CVRPC. However, because of our small size, projected trends provided by the CVRPC are subject to sampling variations that sometimes fluctuate widely.

Homework for Mitch: update recreation language (currently on page 46).

Homework for Mitch: last fall the town applied for grant to support a Streetscape Feasibility Study. Provide Cathy with the outline form that grant.

Homework for Theo: Try to identify updated traffic data.

Cathy feels that it is worthwhile to revise and update our old Middlesex Village/Exit 9 Plan, even if we eliminate direct references to that plan in our updated town plan. It's still a valuable planning resource, even if no longer directly referenced.

Chapter 4 includes a section covering emergency services. Theo will connect with Jeff Koonz about language relating to Volunteer Fire Department. Mitch will also reach out to the town's Emergency Management Coordinator (Paul Otenti) seeking his input on this section.

As discussed with the Select Board last week, we are going to re-activate the town plan survey for about another month in hopes of soliciting further feedback. Responses received by May 9 can still be incorporated into our survey summary in the final draft town plan. We anticipate locking down a final draft approximately May 15 (just outside the 30-day window for our June 19th public hearing).

Elias will take the lead on public outreach by communicating our progress through postings on Front Porch Forum. Outreach will include sharing the current draft of the town plan, survey, and noting important upcoming dates.

Theo and Mitch offered to work on continuing edits to draft plan in coordination with Cathy.

Important dates on the horizon:

Thursday, May 9 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Public Review of Draft Town Plan (not a warned hearing), at Town Hall (upstairs).

Wednesday, June 19 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Public Hearing (warned), at Town Hall (upstairs).

Cathy will provide next draft update on Wednesday, April 10.

Theo shared a write-up from Dave Smith addressing infrastructure. Cathy will incorporate this information into the draft.

Cathy will coordinate with CVRPC, specifically to find out whether they will be able to provide feedback on our draft town plan in advance of the May 9 public review.

Homework for Mitch: update summary of survey results (currently on page 86).

Correspondence

Discussion of another letter from Jim Colby. Mitch will respond to this letter on behalf of the PC.

Next meeting: Thursday, May 9 at 6:00 pm.

Sandy will be away until just before the May meeting, but will distribute an agenda ahead of time.

Theo moved to adjourn. Mitch seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Dick Alderman N/A

Elias Gardner EG

Theo Kennedy _____

Sandra Levine Sandra Levine

Mitch Osiecki MA Osiecki