

Minutes of the
Regular Meeting of the
West Fairlee (WF) Planning Commission (PC)
November 13, 2017
7:00 P.M.

Members Present: John Benjamin, Chair, Al Pfeiffer, Vice Chair, Peggy Burden, Tom Baccei, and Brian Stone

Welcome: John called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Five Minute Share: Don Phoenix gave a history of the WF Food Shelf, named and thanked the many people that were instrumental in securing and preparing the present pantry space. He spoke about donations, naming many but pointing out that few were from West Fairlee. He also stressed that the Food Shelf is independent of the town and has no federal or state funding. He spoke of the purpose: to serve anybody in need regardless of their location. The PC was given a tour of this very neat and organized food pantry.

Minutes: Upon motion made and duly seconded, it was VOTED to approve the Minutes for the October 9, 2017 Regular Meeting and the October 23, 2017 Special Meeting.

Updates:

- 1) John discussed the Conservation Commission's revised handout from the September 11th PC meeting, which had been distributed at the October 9th PC meeting. He said the updated information was highlighted in gray and asked that everyone review it.
- 2) John said he was informed by Kevin Geiger, Senior Planner at Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) that most of the Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) funds have been expended. Kevin said that at some point, TRORC would have to discontinue sending a planner to advise and assist at PC meetings. Kevin said he would need to calculate the remaining hours and could not specify the date during his telephone conversation with John. However, Kevin said that TRORC would continue to support the PC via telephone and email until its agreement with WF expires at the end of May 2018.
- 3) Selectboard Annual Budget Preparations are underway and input from the PC is needed as soon as possible.
- 4) John discussed the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) Analysis of Municipal Road matters, which was emailed to members in advance of the meeting. He said that the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) now has jurisdiction over town roads and has published new, more rigorous standards for Class 4 roads. This may be an unfunded mandate that could result in substantial addition costs for municipalities.

Administrative Matters: John announced his resignation as Chair of the PC, and from his appointment by the Selectboard to the Planning Commission, due to conflicting commitments and priorities. He indicated with regret that his resignation would take effect immediately. He said he has given the Selectboard a list of potential appointees and he encouraged PC members participate in the recruitment of a WF citizen to replace him by suggesting names to the Selectboard.

John's "Bucket list": John distributed his "Bucket List" of items that he hopes the PC will address.

- **Immediately** – PC annual budget input to Delsie

- Vision – Once the 2017 Community Survey results are incorporated, begin publishing drafts of each chapter of the 2018 Town Plan when the PC is satisfied with them on the WF website. Alert the public: perhaps a small ad in the JO letting WF voters know that draft chapters are being published as completed and comment is welcome. Also by publishing a (short) one paragraph overview: what the chapter is about, what changes have been made to the existing version, and why. Provide the website address and a link to the item. Invite comment by email (perhaps set up a WF PC Gmail address).
- Acknowledge each comment, that it will be taken into consideration and THANK the commenter for his/her input.
- Comments should be labelled: date rec'd, chapter & paragraph, and numbered (Land Use – 1, Land Use-2, etc). Ideally, comments should be addressed at each meeting and noted in the Minutes (“Comment Land Use -1 was reviewed and addressed”).
- But the most important comments are those comments received at the PC’s public hearing (probably more detail is needed in subsequent minutes).
- EOY PC report – due in **early January** for Town Report (see last year’s report as a guide)
- “Volunteer (or Person) of the Year” Recognition Award @ Annual Town Meeting ???
- Periodic Community Drop ins – Suggest a “pop-up tent” at Saturday Recycling Center (No food or coffee needed), Just a sign: “West Fairlee residents – What’s on Your Mind ???
- Energy Committee – Sarah (Simonds) Brock @ Vital Communities 802-291-9100, VitalCommunities.org. Sarah is now helping towns like WF form joint energy committees in view of the fact there are limited people available in small towns. She’s anxious to speak with WF. ???
- Newsletter (the previous PC mailed one semiannually) ??? Perhaps mail one with a **concise** executive overview describing changes to each chapter prior to the PC public hearing – was done at least once before. I think there is a sample in my “Old” PC files or Geoff Gardener’s (Al has them on the thumb- drive I gave to him)
- School kids – visit to talk about local government and get info as to how kids view living in WF ???

After discussing “Bucket List” items, John highlighted the contributions of each member and thanked each personally. He expressed his confidence in the PC to complete the 2018 Town Plan, even if the appointment of a new member should be delayed. He said that after working together for 20 months, PC members have the experience and are well-positioned to move forward without him.

John then turned the meeting over to Al Pfeiffer, Vice Chair and he left the meeting at 8:00 P.M.

There was a brief discussion about the way forward. Al said he would follow up as to when the PC would meet again.

Adjournment: There being no further business, it was VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Burden, Acting Clerk