

Planning Commission Meeting
August 20, 2024
7-8 pm
Approved Minutes

Participants: Brenda Field, Rudi Rudell, Janet Wells, Amy Frost
Guests: John Echiverria, Baxter Dohty, Betsy Gaiser

Open Meeting Law Review:

The law distinguishes between “non advisory” and “advisory” bodies as follows. A non advisory, or decision-making, body has supervision, control, or jurisdiction over legislative, quasi-judicial, tax, or budgetary matters. An “advisory” body does not have any of the above powers, but does provide advice to the decision-making bodies. Non-advisory bodies are required to record their meetings (video or audio form) and post the recording for at least 30 days following the approval and posting of meeting minutes.

Planning Commission is considered an advisory body.

Public Comment:

John Echiverria inquired about the recommendations from the Trails Committee and Planning Commission of 9/2021. When will this be reviewed? PC will look at this and the Class IV road policy in the coming meetings.

Trails Committee:

Committee has proposed Tess Mix as a new member. PC voted and she was added to the Trails Committee. Discussion about whether the Trails Committee should remain under the Planning Commission. They could report directly to the SB. But important that the intent of the Town Plan is followed so may be important to keep Trails under PC supervision.

The Conservation Commission is interested in working with Trails Committee as well.

Trails committee is important to town, town plan, committee has taken on an extremely important role, folding it into PC could dilute that.

Bric grant update:

The BRIC was re-opened for bidding, and one bid was submitted by VHB. Grants Administrator reported that the SB will vote to accept this bid at their next regularly scheduled meeting. VHB is aware that the work needs to be completed by November and felt they could meet that deadline.

Letter to State:

Idea for PC to write a letter to the State expressing frustration about the number of available grants v. available volunteers and lack of time/training. We are largely a volunteer town and it can be difficult to navigate the grant system. And a concern that eventually the administrative costs will make taking on new grants prohibitive. Two Rivers can provide assistance to towns (MTAP program) and the State has expressed a desire to help. Everyone will come up with a few bullet points for a letter and come prepared to write a letter at the next meeting.

Tunbridge Walkability Meeting:

JW received a list of people who attended from Rita and comments that were made during Q&A. 44 attended, 35 voted in the straw poll. 14 voted for no build, 15 voted for alternative 1 and 8 voted for alternative 3 (including 2 email votes). Question raised about possibility of crosswalks but no sidewalks as an option. Janet will follow up with Rita/VHB on this. Baxter Dohty questioned ownership of sidewalks in town. Janet explained that the land is owned by the landowners but the State has a right-of-way for the sidewalk and transportation concerns. The proposed new sidewalk would be built on the State's right-of-way. VHB will give the final presentation and recommendations to SB in Oct or Nov.

Everyone agreed that people speed through the village and were in favor of slowing cars down. Rita will set up another speed study (one was done in May 2022) that will then go to VTRANS for approval for speed signs and their placement. Cost for each solar speed sign is 4500k to 6k.

Term limits/new members:

Katherine Maguire has expressed interest and been proposed as a potential new member. We will invite her to the September meeting.