

SUBJECT TO PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL

Town of St. Albans
579 Lake Road
St. Albans, VT. 05478

The Town of St. Albans
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Town Hall, 579 Lake Road
March 22nd, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes

Present: S. Smith (Chair), M. McKennerney, B. Nihan, G. Henderson

Staff Present: Carrie Johnson, Town Manager

Public Present:

CALL TO ORDER

S. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL - SIDEWALK MASTER PLAN

C. Johnson presented the Planning Commission with a draft version of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an updated Sidewalk Master Plan.

S. Smith agreed that the 2003 Sidewalk Master Plan had relative information but the priority of sidewalk locations has changed.

B. Nihan suggested using the words “update current plan to reflect latest thinking.”

S. Smith reminded the Planning Commission that Act 250 Criterion 9L changed the way that sidewalks should be thought about. The Town needs to be able to provide connectivity or else they could be denied permits in the future. Connectivity in the Residential District is important, but connectivity in the Commercial Growth Center is essential. S. Smith asked that emphasis be put on the understanding of Criterion 9L for proposed consultants.

B. Nihan reiterated the need for physical standards in the Sidewalk Master Plan. S. Smith noted that creating physical standards for sidewalks may affect the Road Ordinance.

G. Henderson wondered why the Town wanted to hire a consultant as opposed to having the PC work on the Sidewalk Master Plan. C. Johnson explained there was a fundamental staffing issue. There is currently no planner to help support the PC and prepare the new document in a timely manner, so the Selectboard felt hiring a consultant would be the best path. She also stated it may be easier to get voters to support certain sidewalks if a consultant stands behind the information as a third party with a well thought out plan.

S. Smith wondered where the Town posts RFP's. C. Johnson stated RFP's are usually sent to VLCT, the St. Albans Messenger, 7 Days online, the Town's Facebook page and website. In addition to the previous, C. Johnson was creating a short list of known stormwater consultants to send the RFP to.

S. Smith wondered if the company who worked on the last Sidewalk Master Plan was still in business and recommended reaching out to them.

G. Henderson stated the language of the RFP suggested the Town was looking for a consultant to help the Town create a new plan instead of creating the document for us and wondered if that was our intention. C. Johnson agreed it should be clear they are providing the document. G. Henderson recommended putting a problem statement in the RFP such as “The current Sidewalk Master Plan is outdated in both scope and content and needs to be brought to date to be consistent with current traffic patterns and statute.” He also recommended stating what the deliverables would be such as the Master Plan, a sidewalk policy and a map.

B. Nihan wondered if the City of St. Albans had sidewalk standards. It was unknown.

C. Johnson closed by stating the RFP would be going out by the end of the week and the project was expected to be completed in the next six to eight months.

OTHER BUSINESS

C. Johnson stated the Town is working with the City of St. Albans and consultants Andres Torrezo, Julie Beth Hinds and Wayne Elliot to close the Stormwater Regulation Municipal Planning Grant out. The grant is used to analyze future needs, implement ordinances and update policies and bylaws. The consultants intend to present their findings to the Town and would like to appear before the PC on May 10th. The Selectboard would also be invited to attend. The PC agreed to host the consultants on May 10th.

C. Johnson explained that the Town is without a Planner right now. She is working with the Selectboard to examine the job description and released a job opening ad last week; one or two PC members may be asked to sit in on interviews. Separately, the Town is seeking a stormwater consultant.

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MINUTES

MOTION: S. Smith made a motion to sign the minutes of the meeting dated January 26th, 2016. M. McKennerney seconded. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: B. Nihan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. G. Henderson seconded. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
AJ Johnson, Administrative Assistant

Sam Smith, Chair

Date

Bill Nihan

Date

Mike McKennerney

Date

Grant Henderson

Date