



**TOWN OF STOWE
PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2024**

The Town of Stowe Planning Commission held a regular meeting on **Monday August 19, 2024**, starting at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held at the Stowe Town Office with remote participation via Zoom. The meeting began at 5:30 pm. Members present included Mila Lonetto, Heather Snyder, Bob Davison, John Muldoon, Chuck Ebel, Jill Anne, and Neil Percy. Municipal staff Sarah McShane was also present. Guest Patricia Gabel was in attendance.

In the absence of Chair B.Hamor, the meeting was called to order by Vice Chair N.Percy at approximately 5:30 PM. Vice-Chair N.Percy facilitated the meeting.

Adjustments to the Agenda & Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

S.McShane asked for the Commission to set aside time under ‘correspondence’ to discuss the recently received letter from Spruce Peak Realty regarding the Official Map. She explained that the letter was received after the agenda was posted, otherwise it would have been specifically listed on the agenda. Members agreed.

Review Prior Meeting Minutes [08/5/2024]

C.Ebel motioned to approve the meeting minutes from August 5th as submitted. B.Davison seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: Presentation to the Housing Task Force

S.McShane explained that the Selectboard recently appointed a Housing Task Force. During their first meeting the group requested that the Planning Commission provide them with a presentation on recent projects, Act 47, town plan, etc. M.Lonetto added that it would also be helpful to share information related to infrastructure constraints, the different ‘levers’ previously identified as it relates to housing development and concerns, and how many of the issues are intertwined. Members agreed for staff to provide the presentation in consultation with whomever is appointed as the PC representative. The presentation is scheduled for September 18th. Staff will develop the framework and work with the PC representative.

Discussion: Developing a Stormwater Utility District, Overlay District, Design Specifications, etc.

During the last meeting B.Davison presented the Commission with a framework of concerns related to stormwater management and urged the Commission to prioritize developing a stormwater overlay district and/or a stormwater utility ordinance. Members agreed to review other examples of ordinances from municipalities with similar landscapes/geography. Members discussed the process for recommending an ordinance and zoning amendments and agreed flooding is currently on everyone’s minds. Staff will compile information for the next PC meeting to include the governing statutory authority to create overlay districts through zoning and research examples from other similarly situated municipalities. Members agreed to continue to pursue and further investigate appropriate tools/mechanisms to regulate stormwater management at the municipal level.

Town Plan: Education Goals, Policies, and Tasks – Discuss Forming a Temporary Subcommittee

Staff McShane explained that she and B.Hamor had recently met with Superintendent Heraty to discuss the existing education goals, policies, and tasks in the current Town Plan and a process for involving the school board/community in the update process. Staff McShane suggested the Commission consider forming a subcommittee to tackle this portion of the plan and recommend updates to the Commission towards the end of the year. Members discussed the concerns of decreasing homestead properties as it relates to increasing property taxes and creative ways to improve the current situation. The purpose of forming a subcommittee would be to evaluate the existing data, identify any additional data needs, and then review the existing goals, policies, and tasks and develop recommended updates. Following discussion, M.Lonetto motioned to form an education subcommittee. C.Ebel seconded. Members discussed the number of people to be involved and agreed to five members. Both J.Muldoon and B.Davison volunteered to be on the subcommittee. S.McShane will provide administrative assistance. The motion passed unanimously. S. McShane will contact the superintendent and coordinate with B.Davison and J.Muldoon in scheduling the first meeting.

Continued Discussion: Town Plan Update: Definition ‘Areas Served by Water & Sewer Infrastructure’

S.McShane provided an overview of the prior conversations recently had by the Commission. She explained that the Commission has discussed the different zoning districts and their purposes, overlay districts, sewer and water systems, all in order to better understand and inform discussions on settlement patterns and land use. She explained that the Commission will need to ultimately develop a future land use map to illustrate desired areas for future commercial, residential, etc. land uses, development, and growth. Members broadly discussed the need to increase water/sewer capacity in certain areas “choke points”, replace the lower village pump station(s), and expand storage capabilities. B.Davison suggested for the Commission to further consider impact fees and potentially recommend the adoption to the Selectboard. N.Percy suggested for it to be included as a possible task in the Town Plan. Members discussed inclusionary zoning and some of the pros/cons of administration and enforcement of such requirements. H.Snyder suggested the Commission evaluate the Sewer Service Area boundaries and determine whether they should be modified. S.McShane added that the Commission should be deliberate when developing plan language and noted the difference between shall/should/may etc. C.Ebel added that the plan needs to be accountable. Members discussed the UMR district and potentially recommending that the Town’s Act 250 permit condition be amended to allow certain types of housing development. Members discussed what items should be listed as tasks in the Town Plan and which items should be further evaluated prior to being included in the plan. Members suggested different processes/procedures for further conversations. For the next meeting, staff will prepare and compile the requested information, provide a copy of the existing goals/policies/tasks related to Settlement Patterns, and a list of ideas generated thus far.

Updates/Correspondence/Other Business

Engagement Project Update

Staff McShane provided an update on the community engagement project. She shared amended questions of the month. H.Snyder and J.Anne both volunteered to champion the questions of the month activity to spark community conversations. Members asked whether the Commission could create a social media page for the Planning Commission; staff will inquire.

Correspondence

Staff McShane explained that the Commission recently received a letter from Spruce Peak Realty asking the Commission to consider changes to the Official Map. She explained that the requested

modification relates to an active application currently under review by the DRB and the statutory process for recommending amendments to the Official Map. The Commission agreed to schedule time on the next agenda for discussion with Spruce Peak Realty. Staff will invite them to present at the next meeting for 15-20 minutes.

Review Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Next PC Meeting Date- September 16, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McShane, Planning & Zoning Director

Parking Lot Ideas/Topics for Further Discussion

Map of town-owned properties

Review plans of adjacent communities and regional plan

~~Review zoning districts, purposes, overlay districts~~

Develop map showing residential development activity (in progress)

Develop map showing location of homestead properties

Review requested zoning amendment/ADU's for duplexes.

Stormwater Utility District – Bob's list of recommendations