

1 Richmond Planning Commission

2 Regular Meeting

3 Wednesday, June 17, 2015

4 Approved Minutes

5 **Members Present:** Brian Tellstone, Sean Foley, Joy Reap, Mark Fausel (Co-Chair), Bruce
6 LaBounty (Chair), Marc Hughes, Lauck Parke

7 **Others Present:** Clare Rock (Town Planner/Staff to the DRB); see list

8
9 **LaBounty called the meeting to order**

10
11 **Public comment**

12 n/a

13
14 **Administrative Items**

15
16 Approve Meeting Minutes - May 20, 2015

17 *Fausel made a motion to approve the May 20, 2015 minutes, second by Tellstone to approve the*
18 *minutes, all in favor. So voted. Hughes, Parke, and Foley abstained.*

19
20 Approve Meeting Minutes - June 3, 2015

21 *Foley made a motion to approve the June 3, 2015, seconded by Tellstone. All in favor. So voted.*
22 *Reap and Fausel abstained.*

23
24 **Interview with Zoning Officer Candidate**

25
26 Geoff Urbanik introduced Niels Rinehart. PC members asked Rinehart some questions.

27
28 *Fausel made a motion to endorse Rinehart's application for the position of Zoning Administrative*
29 *Officer, second by Foley, all in favor. So voted.*

30
31 **Continued Review of the Utilities and Facilities Section of the Town Plan with Guests Police**
32 **Chief Alan Buck, Fire Chief Tom Levesque & Rich Dana, President of Richmond Rescue**

33
34 Chief Buck started by stating the police department space is inadequate for the needs of the
35 department. There was a vote at the 2013 town meeting to support investigating a joint building.
36 Different options may be considered with different combinations with rescue and fire.

37
38 In regard to the Fire Department, 30-40% of calls are interstate calls and the best situation is to have
39 the building on East or West Main Street, not Bridge Street, so the equipment doesn't have to go
40 over the tracks and up Bridge Street.

41
42 For the Police, the department ideally needs a minimum of 3 holding cells and 2 car ports. Currently
43 they have no training space at the police department and there is no training space at the fire
44 department.

45
46 The number of officers has not really increased since Chief Buck has been here, but number of calls
47 have increased (the PD was established in 1972). Driving under the influence of drugs cases have
48 increased and processing drunk driving and under the influence cases now take 6 times as long to
49 process (was 1 hour, now up to 6 hours.)

50
51 There have been some conversations about a regional law enforcement department – overall it
52 would be cheaper to consolidate regionally. Jericho is thinking about creating a department,
53 Richmond should have a conversation with them about a possible collaboration.

1
2 Tom Levesque, Fire Chief doesn't see the need for any more engines or equipment in the immediate
3 future but this might be dependent on how Jolina Court is developed. The Fire department building
4 is currently adequate for the next 10 years. The Town has a 99-year lease with the State on the Fire
5 Department lot. The building was built in 1970. If Richmond needed a ladder truck or a tanker
6 truck, they won't fit in the current station. The ideal spot for a new fire department is closer to the
7 interstate but should ask the ISO for input (Insurance Service Office, who set the fire rates.) ISO
8 inspects every 10 years. Ideally there should be a Fire Station within 5 miles of every residence.
9 Ideally would need a substation in Jonesville.

10
11 Based upon our current equipment, Richmond cannot have more than 5 buildings, over 3 stories tall
12 (we currently have 3 buildings over) before ISO would require a ladder truck. The current
13 department building cannot house a ladder truck.

14
15 The PC suggested Richmond have a professional consultant outline the specific criteria for a public
16 safety building options.

17
18 In regard to Rescue, the ambulance building built in 1996 and has one truck. The current building is
19 crowded, and there is not a lot of work space, storage space, or sleeping space, and they are pushing
20 limits of training space for public training such as CPR, car seat inspections and etc.

21
22 Calls are up to 500 calls a year and the public's expectations have changed and increased. Best
23 practices have also increased. The building has no public entrance and there is not enough parking
24 for classes. Rescue invites other squads to come for classes and there isn't any space. The rescue
25 humvee is parked on-site, outside, and the organization would like a 3rd bay, more classroom space,
26 study space, storage space... etc. and would like to be planning for it now.

27
28 There is lots of cross over between fire and rescue. If you are going to be a firefighter then you
29 need to be an EMT first. Original plans for the rescue building show there was room for another
30 bay. Ideal location would be in the Gateway. Ideal building would need to around 7500 sf.

31
32 For a combined building estimates are in the more than 15,000 sf range, but greater if it would if
33 merging a service with another town.

34
35 The newly formed public safety committee has met once.

36
37 Rescue is a non-town entity, this was based upon an agreement created back in the 1970's. Rescue
38 has a greater service range outside of Town.

39
40 The Fire department could use another employee. Currently the Police only has a part time clerk.
41 There is potential for the Police and Fire to share an employee in the future. The Fire Chief will be
42 retiring soon, but doesn't have date set. Rescue has 3 employees: Director of Operations, Training
43 Officer, plus additional employee. All departments find it hard to keep up on administration.

44
45 There are Fire Station Grants (but projects need to be shovel-ready) and the Police chief felt the
46 Town could use a grant writer.

47
48 The PC felt it would be good to have updates on committee work, and they can send information to
49 Clare with updates and additional information.

50
51 The PC thanked the guests for coming.

1 **Initial Discussion of the Education and Childcare Section of the Town Plan Guest John**
2 **Alberghini, Superintendent of Chittenden East Supervisory Union**
3

4 John Alberghini, started by discussing projections for enrollment, there has been a drop over the last
5 15 years and now it's stabilized. But they are still seeing drop in Underhill, but District will
6 probably stay around 2300-2500 system wide. There will probably will be some changes system
7 wide and does foresee school choice in the future.

8
9 Alberghini doesn't see the supervisory union offices in Town Center Building long term, because
10 there is space in some of the schools. Foresees the central office to move into the one of the school
11 buildings.

12
13 Regarding the Richmond Campus (elementary and middle school), RLT land purchase will provide
14 more outdoor education options and having more than 1 exit out of the campus is very expensive.
15 Would like an emergency exit.

16
17 There was 450 kids at Camels Hump, and 350 at elementary school, but the numbers have gone
18 down. There is plenty of capacity at the Richmond schools and would like more kids and families to
19 move to Richmond.

20
21 Preschool, there may be more need at the school level. Act 166 pushes to have a private public
22 partnership for preschool opportunities. Similar to Poker Hill and unfortunately the Playcare Center
23 may be going out of business.

24
25 Regarding Pre-K, there is an established preschool at Richmond Elementary School and now there
26 is a voucher to help pay for up to 10 hours a week. Preschool enrollment is on a lottery system, if
27 you don't get in you can use the voucher to pay for the equivalent care at another eligible program.

28
29 High School capacity down from 1200 to 850, Chittenden East has seen drop in enrollment.

30
31 Under the new funding system due to the merger, the whole system would pay for a new roof, vs
32 having Richmond just paying for it. The Richmond schools are in good shape. The schools have
33 done a good job planning for building maintenance and they are assets for the community.

34
35 Alberghini asked if there is a way to be better partners with the town. MMU After Dark is
36 successful and it would be good to have some night classes at the elementary and middle school.
37 Plus opportunity to make the use of the gym equipment open to the public.

38
39 There is a need for more options, such as tech programs, but there isn't the infrastructure. Hopefully
40 there would be more specialized programs emerging. There is a big farm to school movement in the
41 district, and there may be the potential for more options such as renewable manufacturing tech
42 programs.

43
44 In regard to alternative school options, the other option is to send children to a private school out of
45 town. The Supervisory Union is currently looking at an emersion program at the elementary level
46 with multiple languages (or a stem program).

47
48 Regarding numbers of homeschoolers there are not many. There is limited high school choice – 9
49 students are currently using the choice option. Homeschoolers can take classes at the public schools.
50

1 The PC has a question about local students involved in local government, it would be great to get
2 more kids involved.

3

4 The PC thanks Alberghini for attending.

5

6 **Code of Ethics Document**

7 A recent version was distributed the PC members, dated June 2015.

8 Joy Reap asked about what the differences were, Fausel identified the minimal change from the
9 copy they received earlier. Members signed copies.

10

11 **Brief Discussion about the town plan**

12 Brief discussion about the broad process. Reap gave update of farmers market event. Hughes will
13 attend next steering committee meeting.

14

15 **Other Business**

16 Geoff Urbanik is asking for volunteers for a Community Resilience Organization discussion and is
17 looking for 1 or up to 3 volunteers to meet at the Richmond Town Center July 1, 2015 at 2pm.

18

19 Mark Fausel offered and Bruce LaBounty offered.

20

21 Foley would like an electronic copy of the letter.

22

23 **Next Meeting**

24

25 Rock provided an overview of some potential topics for the next few meetings. If none of them line
26 up for the July 1 meeting the PC will discuss the zoning changes.

27

28 **Adjourn**

29 *Tellstone made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Foley, all in favor. So voted.*

30

31 The meeting ending at 9:17PM

32

33 Respectfully submitted by Clare Rock, Town Planner/Staff to the DRB