

Richmond Planning Commission Public Hearing

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Unapproved Minutes

Members Present: Mark Fausel, Joy Reap, Alison Anand, Brian Tellstone, Scott Nickerson, Lauck Parke
Others Present: Jessica Draper, Town Planner; Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Robert Low, Judy Rosovsky, Jeff Forward, Virginia Clarke, Mary Houle, Chris Granda, Cathleen Gent, Patty Bruschette, Wright Preston, Bradford Elliott, Christy Witters, John Rankin, David Sander

Called to Order: 7:13 pm

The public hearing of the planning commission regarding the draft 2018 town plan opened with a brief presentation from the town planner outlining the planning process thus far and an overview of the draft plan. Mark Fausel opened the floor for public comment upon completion of the presentation.

The topic of including a laundromat in the plan as a facility of interest was brought up by Mary Houle. The management of the upcoming town forest, Andrews Forest, was also brought up by Bob Low. The planning commission made mention of feedback already received including regional planning commission feedback, an email from Lou Borie, and an email from Christy Witters.

A discussion then ensued regarding the hearing and voting process. It was clarified that in order to move forward, the planning commission would make edits to the draft, and pass the draft on to the selectboard for their next regular meeting. Many members of the public expressed concerns that the timeline was too short.

Jeff Forward brought up that the energy goals in the draft town plan were not equal to the state's energy goals. Virginia Clarke mentioned that the large number of actions and goals in the plan were ambitious, and that there is a likely a cost associated with each one. It was discussed that more detail should go into the goal tables such as partners, potential costs, etc.

Jeff Forward and Chris Granda returned the conversation to the energy technical plan. It was mentioned that state law requires all new construction to be compliant with RBEs, and that our town zoning administrator is the town official who handles said compliance. The option of naming Efficiency Vermont within the energy plan was also discussed.

Cathleen Gent brought up the scenic viewshed assessment component of the plan. Many members of the audience voiced concerns that viewsheds and ridgelines are not already explicitly named in the plan. The planning commission explained that they did not feel they were at the stage to specifically name properties.

Many members of the audience expressed the need to better define the areas included in the Future Land Use map and more carefully describe the prohibited, allowed, and encouraged uses for each. Language regarding habitats, wildlife, and forests was discussed, and there was a suggestion to revisit the science to action report.

The planning commission decided to poll the room to see if anyone present thought the plan could be moved forward to the selectboard upon minor editing. One out of 13 attendees said yes, the remaining 12 said it was not ready in their opinion. Upon gauging this reaction, the planning commission decided to close the hearing, and move into discussion.

Lauck Park moved to close the public hearing, Mark Fausel seconded the motion. All were in favor:
Public Hearing Closed: 9:18 pm

The planning commission discussed the idea of abandoning the current timeline for the draft plan, and what they would have to do in that case. The next viable timeline proposed would include using the 2018 Election Day in November. This would allow for roughly 5-6 months for editing the plan to meet the needs and desires of both the planning commission and the public.

Lauck Park moved to abandon the current timeline of the draft town plan and not pass it on to the selectboard, Mark Fausel seconded the motion. 4 were in favor, 2 were opposed. Motion passed.

Brian Tellstone moved to adjourn, Joy Reap seconded the motion. All were in favor:

Adjourned: 9:45 pm

Respectfully submitted, Jessica Draper, Town Planner