## Richmond Planning Commission-Town Plan Hearing

Monday, June 25th, 2018

Unapproved Minutes

Members Present: Mark Fausel, Alison Anand, Lauck Parke, Brian Tellstone, Joy Reap, Virginia Clarke, Scott Nickerson

Others Present: Jessica Draper, Town Planner; Lori Day; Jen Parizo; Bard Hill; Judy Rosovsky; Jeff Forward; Cathleen Gent; Jon Kart; Bob Low; Fran Thomas; Marie Thomas; Betsy Hardy; Fran Pomerantz; MMCTV-Ruth Miller

Called to Order: 7:02pm

Mark called the hearing to order and asked the public if there were any objections to the planner speaking during the hearing. Jessica gave a brief overview PowerPoint presentation of the plan components and editing process. Fran Thomas asked what the consequences were of not having a town plan. Jessica said that the consequences were loss of eligibility for some grants, loss of village center designation, loss of deference in legal proceedings, bylaws cannot be changed, and a capital plan cannot be approved. Many members of the public thanked the planning commission for their hard work and dedication over the last few years working on the plan.

Bob Low asked about implementation of the plan and who was going to be assigned to different tasks. Virginia directed him to the implementation table. Marie suggested annual progress checks at town meeting time. Fran agreed that follow up would be needed. Bard said that SMART goal creation can be difficult for small towns to flesh out. Virginia reminded everyone that many of the actions are existing ongoing efforts already being done. Jeff suggested placing the table on the town website for tracking purposes in a format that can be sorted in a variety of ways.

Virginia mentioned that regional planning liked our vision connection sections. Marie mentioned the RiseVT Richmond Huntington Bolton effort and that it matches up well with our plan. Cathleen asked if Highway was part of discussion of Goal 2 Action 1 of Emergency Resilience. Marie asked if these were state standards. Jeff suggested cross referencing the stormwater master plan in the Emergency Resilience section since it is mentioned in Utilities and Facilities. Bob mentioned storm damage occurring in new places and that the town should be vigilant about storm intensity.

It was asked if the plan had been state certified for energy. Jessica explained that would likely occur in late fall. Mark said he believed we are well prepared for that process with the current draft. Cathleen asked about resources we want protected; Virginia and Scott made reference to the state and local and possible and known constraints table. Bard said he noticed there seemed to be a higher standard or expectation for the town than the residents for energy efforts. Joy mentioned the debate about energy codes and how stretch code language was removed. Jon said he generally supports the plan, but that the planning commission also received positive feedback about stretch code and not just negative. Jeff said he was disappointed at the removal of stretch code language and wanted to make the point that energy efficient homes are more affordable long-term. He asked the planning commission to please consider stretch code during zoning. Jon reminded everyone that the proposed stretch code language was “to consider” the code. Alison said that the reaction of many residents was panicked. Jon asked if a group of people were panicked about getting it put back in would it then change it back. Joy explained that even when they softened the language it was still upsetting. Bard mentioned the idea of energy bonuses. Bob Low said that he only witnessed three people oppose the language and it should be reconsidered. Mark explained that leaving it out of the plan doesn’t prevent future discussion. Marie said that the primary goal is to get the town plan passed and that leaving out triggering language wasn’t a bad compromise. Alison said that the language around the code is offensive. Jeff explained that the greater concern for most opponents is the renovations and additions inclusion of the code and that most if not all people agree that new construction should be energy efficient. Fran asked if the town could have its own energy regulation. Cathleen suggested language that the town consider energy codes standards and bonuses. Alison also mentioned that as RBES/CBES evolves, what is currently stretch code will become RBES/CBES and a new stricter stretch code will be created. Bob asked about town plan consideration in zoning proceedings upon passage. Jessica said the DRB is supposed to consider potential or proposed changes to zoning when making decisions but they are not bound by it. Virginia said that the 90x50 goal is ambitious and needs major discussion.

Bard asked about the neighboring towns comment from CCRPC. Jessica explained that the plan was missing a statement of compliance with neighboring town plans. Fran Thomas suggested the planning commission reach out to large landowners regarding their development intentions with their parcels in an assistance capacity. Judy said that action 3 of goal 1 in Future Land Use supports an effort like that. Cathleen suggested removing the word troubling from page 22. Joy said that the language on that page was carefully agreed upon at a previous meeting. Bard asked what trends the language was referring to. Cathleen asked for clarification on line 21 and line 58 on page 25. The commission agreed to review that language.

Jon asked about Goal 1 action 1 of Housing and whether the “identified” districts were already so or needed to be identified in the future zoning effort. Jessica said it was intended to be later but that could be clarified. Bard explained that housing required for aging in place needs to be energy efficient, designed with abilities in mind, and the size needs to be on the smaller side. Mark mentioned the creation of a housing committee as a first step. Bard mentioned affordability versus level of service provided by the town.

Judy asked that the commission add the word “helped” to line 19 on page 33. Jeff asked about bicycle commuting and Virginia referenced line 34 of page 37. Bard mentioned the Breadloaf facilities assessment and suggested it be added to utilities and facilities. Jeff stated that in his work the three major goals are health and safety, durability, and waste and energy efficiencies. He mentioned that the town center building is health/safety poor. Fran suggested looking to other towns for facility sharing. Bard discussed the state sharing facilities after Irene destroyed state offices. Cathleen said she would like to see language about recreational facilities. Fran said the rec committee needs more involvement. Mark mentioned that he would be tabling at the 4th of July event. Some further discussion ensued about the need for a rec director or community outreach position.

Jeff and other attendees applauded the commission for completion of the plan and hearing. Bob Low thanked Jessica for her work as well. Cathleen asked if a list of the changes between now and the selectboard meeting would be made available. Mark closed the hearing and the commission proceeded to discussion of changes.

The commission decided to add progress review under responsibilities in the introduction. They also agreed to cross reference the stormwater master plan in emergency resilience. They chose not to add in energy code language that had been previously removed. They agreed to CCRPC’s suggested changes. They chose not to add landowner outreach language but were willing to look into options regarding that topic. They chose not to change the language around the word troubling in the FLU section. They agreed to reword page 25 line 20, the “identified districts” language and add “helped” to natural resources. They agreed to add in language about the facilities assessment, and facility sharing options.

Joy made the motion to forward the town plan to the selectboard including the discussed changes. Scott seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Adjourn

Brian made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Joy, all were in favor.

Adjourned 9:45pm