

Richmond Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

October 17, 2012

Approved Minutes

Members Present: Gary Bressor (Chair), Lou Borie (Vice-Chair), Mark Fausel, Joe McHugh, Dan Renaud

Members Absent:, Christy Witters, one vacancy

Others Present: Cathleen Gent (Town Planner/Staff to the DRB), Tyler Gingras (Green Mountain Engineering)

7:15 PM Call to order by the Chair.

Public Comment – None.

Bridge Street Sidewalk: Cemetery Area

Tyler Gingras from Green Mountain Engineering joined the Planning Commission for the discussion. Gingras provided an overview of the preliminary engineering plans for the Bridge Street infrastructure and streetscape project, which encompasses the area between the intersection of Bridge Street and Main Street to the Winooski River (does not include any area south of the Winooski). He noted that the engineering plans are very close to being ready for presentation to the Selectboard, after additional discussion with the Planning Commission and Cemetery Commission takes place about the sidewalk plan in front of the cemetery. Gingras distributed a set of preliminary engineering plans and reviewed a number of general changes involve new curbing with a 6 inch curb reveal, re-grading the road from Church Street to Esplanade Street, and changing the surface from asphalt to concrete. The Planning Commission discussed the option of concrete versus granite curbing, but did not offer any recommendation. Gingras said the granite is roughly twice as expensive as concrete.

Gingras discussed lowering the road in the area near the Town Center by about a foot and noted that such lowering would alter the stormwater pattern so that water will no longer enter the Town Center property via the driveway. The Planning Commission and Gent discussed how that might change the plans for a pond in the rear of the property. Gingras also noted that there will not be a full replacement for the water main, since at least some of that line appears to be in good shape. He said that the alignment of Bridge Street between Church and Esplanade will not change much because of the presence of the existing utility poles and the addition of a green strip. At the old blue seal building (Sonoma Station restaurant), there will be a sidewalk with a mountable curb, since parking will need to remain in the front of the building. Gingras discussed the fact that Jonina Court and Railroad Street do not line up and suggested that a crosswalk would make sense at that area. Gingras showed the plans for the area in front of the Richmond Market. Gent noted that the Selectboard might move forward with a sidewalk in front of the market ahead of the other project elements. The Planning Commission discussed whether a crosswalk right in front of Richmond Market might make better sense. Gingras noted that there are no changes from the ESPC plan along Depot Street. He discussed the new sidewalk on the east side, from Main Street to the railroad tracks, noting that a retaining wall approximately 4 feet in height will be needed along 14 Pleasant Street, which might necessitate obtaining a partial right-of-way to that property, at least for construction. The Planning Commission offered a suggestion that it might make sense to lower the grade for a longer area leading to the retaining wall, which might allow for a lower retaining wall. Gingras added that the plans call for a pre-cast concrete wall. Gingras and the Planning Commission then discussed the sidewalk on the west side of the business block. Gingras discussed the plan to eliminate the existing bump out and crosswalk (at the location of the former Richmond Beverage store) and add a handicap parking space and bicycle rack. A new crosswalk is proposed for the lower end of the block near Pleasant Street. The Planning Commission did not offer any comment on that proposal, but did suggest that the curb should be changed to granite in that area, should concrete be used along Bridge Street.

Gingras then discussed the plan for addressing stormwater along Bridge Street. The current swale along the railroad will remain in place, as it would be difficult to divert that to any other location, including under the railroad. He said that nine stormwater inlets will be added along Bridge Street: currently there are three. He said that untreated stormwater will go right into the Winooski River and noted that, based on the size of the project, the VT Department of Environmental Conservation stormwater requirements are met. The Planning Commission discussed the fact that stormwater

1 treatment in the village would be appropriate. Gingras responded that any treatment is not within the
2 project scope.

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4 The Planning Commission then discussed the proposed plan for the sidewalk immediately in front of the
5 cemetery. Gingras said that the plan calls for a pre-cast concrete retaining wall next to the sidewalk,
6 with no steps going into the cemetery and no greenspace. Planning Commission also offered opinions
7 about the value of having a green space between the road and the sidewalk near the cemetery. Gingras
8 replied that the section of sidewalk is short and that, by not having greenspace, the retaining wall height
9 can be lower. With the current plan, the wall height will be 3 feet on average, with a maximum of four
10 feet. The Planning Commission discussed the fact that there is quite a lot of untapped right-of-way on
11 the west side of Bridge Street in that area so the road could be moved over and allow for a sidewalk in
12 front of the cemetery and eliminate the need for a retaining wall. Gingras said it is difficult to move the
13 utility poles to a new location and that current option inconveniences the fewer number of neighbors. He
14 reviewed the plan in front of the library, where the sidewalk will curve slightly and meet up with the
15 current sidewalk on the north end of the town center property. The Planning Commission decided to
16 discuss this topic further at another Planning Commission meeting.

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18 Gingras left at approximately 8:45 PM.

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20 **Mail** - Gent reviewed the mail.

21
22 **Meeting Minutes & Town Planner Report**

23 *Meeting Minutes: For September 19, 2012*

24 Due to a lack of a quorum of those present at the September 19th meeting, the Planning Commission
25 did not review the minutes.

26
27 *Meeting Minutes: For October 3, 2012*

28 No amendments were offered. Motion by Fausel, seconded by Borie, to approve the minutes. Voting: in
29 favor: 4 (Bressor, Borie, Fausel, Renaud); 0 opposed; 1 abstention (McHugh).

30
31 *Town Planner Report*

32 The Planning Commission discussed public outreach regarding the Richmond Zoning and Subdivision
33 Regulations. The Commission made minor changes to the flyer that will be distributed in the Times Ink
34 newspaper. The Planning Commission also discussed the upcoming October 29th information session
35 and ways to reach out to the public via Front Porch Forum.

36
37 **Richmond Town Plan Update**

38 The Planning Commission postponed its discussion of the town plan update.

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40 **Adjournment**

41 McHugh made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Fausel. So voted. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM.

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43
44 Respectfully submitted by Cathleen Gent, Town Planner/Staff to the DRB