

Hardwick Planning Commission  
August 10, 2021  
Via Zoom with Physical Location at the Memorial Building  
Minutes

HPC Members Present: Joyce Mandeville; Ken Davis; Michael Haveson; Jim Lewis; and Dave Gross, Chair

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator (ZA)

Absent: Shari Cornish

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:33 pm. Joyce Mandeville moved to approve the agenda. Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor. Joyce Mandeville moved to approve the July 13, 2021 meeting minutes. Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor.

DuBois and King, Inc. released preliminary plans for the Vermont Agency of Transportation. They are seeking comments by August 27, 2021. The Planning Commission began to review the plans as presented. Dave Gross flagged page 44 of 78 as a part of the plans with an outstanding question. Specifically, will there be sidewalks incorporated into the North Side of Mill Street. This correlates with #10 in the Bike and Ped Safety Walk Through. "10. Crosswalk at Market – This crosswalk is poorly placed between driveway openings with no receiving sidewalk. It was determined this crosswalk should not be restriped as part of the project."

Additional questions arose and the Planning Commission would prefer to have a Zoom call meeting with DuBois and King and the Town Manager and the Select Board so that these questions can be answered prior to comments being submitted. Kristen will ask the Town Manager's office to schedule this meeting (*requested on 8/11/21*).

The Commission also reviewed the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Walk Through and had questions about #4 , which relates to milling/paving drive aprons in areas where pavement is wide.

The questions and recommendations from the earlier review will also be incorporated into comments for the plans.

- Question: Does VTRANS have a plan for the Mill Street segment of the project? Specifically, what will occur with the current access points and driveways/parking lots on Mill Street (Village Market, GRACE, Hays, etc)? Are sidewalks feasible?
- Recommendation: On South Main Street/Route 14, retain the handicap spots near the church and shift the centerline.
- Question: Regarding non-compliant parking spots that are being removed by this project, does the Town or does VTRANS have the authority to re-stripe parking spots after the project is complete?
- Question: Would it be possible to install temporary bump-out "simulations" this year that mimic those in the proposal to demonstrate how they will affect both pedestrian and vehicle traffic?
- Recommendation: Remove the proposed bulb-out near the crosswalk on North Main Street by the laundry and across from the Inn. Replace the existing parking spot with a painted "No Parking" demarcation.
- Question: The parking evaluation states that on Mill Street the 4 parking spots in front of the laundry will be reduced to 3. Could this be clarified? Does it include the spots in front of the former Galaxy bookstore (bank building)?

No new information regarding the proposal on Hopkins Hill (AT&T expansion) was received prior to the meeting. A final site plan will probably be received prior to the September meeting.

Dave Gross attended the July 17<sup>th</sup> community meeting on the design of the Pedestrian Bridge in Hardwick. He reported that the meeting was very productive and positive. The consensus of those in attendance was that the replacement bridge should be strong; a pedestrian walkway but able to allow bikes to utilize the bridge. The bridge could be substantial enough to allow viewing of the Lamoille River from the bridge crossing. Suggestions also focused on using both sides of the river with access to the river, which would encourage use of the river (swimming, fishing, and sightseeing). Attendees wished to replace and upgrade the structure versus merely fixing it for the lowest price.

Ken Davis suggested that covering the bridge would protect the decking and allow easier snow removal. The actual structure is still in the concept phase and more discussion is needed. The abutments appear to only need minor repairs.

There will be an economic benefit from re-opening the bridge and improvement to the structure may increase the amount of economic benefits. The Planning Commission will monitor the progress of the proposals and make certain that the plans match the Municipal Plan. This will be a multi-year process. Dave Gross predicts that the Downtown Commission will be a driving force in this process.

Dave also had a meeting with the State of Vermont regarding the granite culverts on the Rail Trail. These are located in East Hardwick and they will be maintained and protected. There is a current completion date of November 2022 for the entire Rail Trail. Vermont has a website for the LVRT projects - <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/lvrt> - this site has a map with links to all of the project elements (ie. target completion date).

Dave requested suggestions for the Phase II recommendations. He has provided his images to the East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization (EHNO) and will solicit responses from the neighbors. Local Motion will be meeting with Dave on August 11, 2021 to discuss a study. Dave recommended that Michael Haveson also speak to Local Motion about conducted a similar study in the down town of Hardwick. Kristen suggested utilizing the AARP walk-thru guide for Church Street and other streets with pedestrian and traffic issues. Phase II could review crosswalk placement. What are the actual rules about placement? Is there anything referenced in the Town ordinances? Perhaps the Commission can suggest new signage and crosswalks for the entire Hardwick Village. Dave asked Commission members to bring ideas to the next meeting. Kristen will remind the Commission in the week before the meeting.

The next meeting will be conducted by Zoom with a physical location of the third floor of the Memorial Building. The date will be September 14, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

Ken Davis moved to close the meeting at 8:00. Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor.

The next HPC meeting will be by Zoom on August 10, 2021.

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA