

Hardwick Planning Commission  
June 14, 2022  
Atkins Field – In Person meeting  
Minutes

HPC Members Present: Shari Cornish; Jim Lewis; and Dave Gross, Chair

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator

Absent: Joyce Mandeville; Ken Davis; and Michael Haveson

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:30 pm. With a lack of quorum, no motions will be made and the meeting will proceed as a work session.

**Phase II:**

The Planning Commission conducted an AARP walkability review on May 18, 2022 at 10:30 am. The draft version of the audit was reviewed by the attending members and suggestions for improvement were made. The updated draft version will be examined at the July 12 meeting and any motion to approve the audit will be made at that time.

Local Motion has submitted a proposal for pedestrian and traffic safety updates in East Hardwick's village center. This is a preliminary examination that is currently waiting for feedback from the East Hardwick Neighborhood Organization (EHNO). EHNO needs to find a time to meet that is compatible with the work schedule of the Local Motion consultant (Jonathan). Once the initial proposal is finalized, the end product will be forwarded to the Planning Commission.

Two temporary speed bumps have been installed on West Church Street. Kristen Leahy asked the Town Manager's office for public response to the installation. Only one complaint has been received from a community member who does not live on West Church Street. No complaints have been received from the Highland Avenue neighborhood. Shari Cornish, who lives in the Highland Avenue neighborhood, confirmed that there has been an increase in traffic on Highland Avenue (which can serve as a bypass to the downtown and to West Church). However, the increase has been manageable.

Michael Haveson was not able to attend the meeting, but he reported that the two speed bumps have been beneficial to the West Church neighborhood. He suggested that adding a third bump would further reduce the speed issue. He also suggested installing longer speed bumps (across the entire street) to prevent attempts to circumvent the obstacles (drive around). The installation has definitely reduced speeds and the amount of traffic in the West Church neighborhood.

Additional speed bump installations in other Hardwick neighborhoods should be reviewed and discussed. Michael Haveson walks throughout the downtown area and he can identify other beneficial locations. This will be discussed at future HPC meetings.

**Zoning Updates:**

The State of Vermont has recently adopted new legislation regarding Housing in Vermont. There may be zoning changes that should be included this year. In order to allow enough time to review the new statutory requirements, the Planning Commission will wait an addition month to have the public hearing for the proposed updates. The hearing will now be on August 9, 2022 at 6:30 pm. (The regular meeting will follow).

**Grant Opportunities:**

The US Department of Transportation has issued a new funding opportunity. Safe Streets and Roads for All will have Action Plan grants that could be utilized to retain a consultant or an engineer who can propose options for the problematic areas of the community. The grant is due on September 15, 2022. After discussion among the Planning Commission members, the consensus was that this grant would be beneficial to Hardwick. The funding framework also appears to be feasible for Hardwick. This would be a possible request for the new Community Development Coordinator. Dave Gross will email the Town Manager to forward the Planning Commission's interest in pursuing the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant funding.

**Updates from Commission Members:**

Dave Gross, Shari Cornish, and Kristen Leahy attended the Downtown and Historic Preservation Conference on June 9, 2022. Shari's observations were recorded with the Select Board. Dave provided a brief overview from his workshop attendance. Dave attended workshops which delved into the community connections with Mountain bike and hiking trails. The MVRT in the northwest section of Vermont recommended working with VTrans and Local Motion. The trails have been utilized by visitors but, in that area, the usage is 80% local. A trail friendly business program has been developed in other communities. Additionally, Dave learned that the LVRT section in Hardwick will not be completed until September or possibly 2023.

The State Park approach to the LVRT is not proceeding. The State park system does not have the staff or the expertise to provide oversight. VTrans (AOT) will retain the overview aspect. There is a possibility that there will be very limited oversight of the trail system in the future. This may need to be a component of Hardwick's planning around the LVRT. A citizen oversight committee and/or citizen group may be essential in the success of the Hardwick section. This could be a group that provides patrols or communicates with neighboring landowners.

The meeting ended at 7:50 pm.

The next HPC meeting will be a hybrid meeting with Zoom and the Memorial Building at 6:30 pm.

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA