

Hardwick Planning Commission
April 9, 2024
Hybrid – In Person and Via Zoom
DRAFT Minutes

HPC Members Present: Joyce Mandeville (Zoom); Shari Cornish; Larry Fliegelman; Ken Davis; Bud Stevens (1st Alternate); Kole (2nd Alternate) and Dave Gross, Chair

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator; Heather Carrington; and Tracy Martin, Community Development Coordinator (Zoom)

Absent: Michael Haveson (Kole assumes vote); Jim Lewis (Bud Stevens assumes vote)

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:32 pm. Ken Davis moved to approve the agenda as written. Shari Cornish seconded. All members were in favor. Shari Cornish moved to approve the March 12, 2024 meeting minutes. Ken Davis seconded. All members were in favor.

Updates from the Community Development Coordinator – Tracy Martin

Tracy Martin joined the meeting by Zoom. No information has been received regarding the award of the Transportation Alternatives Grant. The grant was written to conduct a scoping study on Mill Street and a portion of Main Street. If this particular grant is not received, then Tracy will pursue other funding sources.

The Pedestrian Bridge project is nearly through the permitting stage. The next task will be to revisit the LVRT-Main Street loop proposal which was initiated by the Local Motion study on December 7, 2022. A shortened version was provided to the Select Board in April 2023. In May, Tracy would like to revisit this project with the Planning Commission (*kl – the item has been added to the May 2024 agenda and the ZA is meeting with the new owner of the Hardwick Inn on 4/15/24 as there is a component that should be discussed prior to resubmission of the loop proposal to the Select Board*).

The East Hardwick and Depot Street trail heads are being reviewed with the State of Vermont.

Motion: None at this time.

Updates from the Bylaw Modernization Consultant – Heather Carrington

Hardwick needs to define the phrase “Served by water and sewer” to meet the HOME Act requirements. Kristen and Heather met with David Upson to look at language that would include the Urban Compact in Hardwick and the correlating map for that area. After reviewing the parcels included in the Urban Compact, Heather found several Compact Residential Class 2 and Class 3 parcels that do not meet the dimensional standards required by the HOME Act. The recommendation was to make a boundary adjustment to the Village Neighborhood zoning district and move the 8 parcels from the Compact Residential to the Village Neighborhood zoning district. In addition, there are 4 parcels that are partially in the Compact Residential district and primarily in the Village Neighborhood district. These 4 parcels would become completely Village Neighborhood. The entire parcels are as follows: 09033-0000 (Jacobson & Haley); 09033-00050 (Town of Hardwick); 09032-00010 (Neill); 09029-00030 (Herman & Casto); 09031-00000 (Person); 09032-00000 (Greaves); 09030-00010 (Davis); and 09029-00020 (Brown). The partial parcels are as follows: 24080-00000 (Bellavance & Menard); 24079-00000 (Richardson); 23081-00050 (Holt & Hale), and 23081-00000 (Hale).

Motion: To adjust the boundary of the Village Neighborhood zoning district to include the following parcels, which are currently in the Compact Residential zoning district: 09033-0000 (Jacobson & Haley); 09033-00050 (Town of Hardwick); 09032-00010 (Neill); 09029-00030 (Herman & Casto); 09031-00000 (Person); 09032-00000 (Greaves); 09030-00010 (Davis); 09029-00020 (Brown); 24080-00000 (Bellavance & Menard); 24079-00000 (Richardson); 23081-00050 (Holt & Hale), and 23081-00000 (Hale). This adjustment will be reflected in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization update.

Larry Fliegelman made the motion and Shari Cornish seconded. All members were in favor. Ken Davis recused himself (owner of one of the listed properties).

Kristen will send a letter to the owners of the impacted properties to provide additional information and to request any input on the proposed adjustment.

Motion: To include the following definition for “Served by Water and Sewer”: “Any parcel that currently has Town water and sewer connections or is within the limits of the Urban Compact of Hardwick. The map of this area is available for viewing in the municipal office or online from the VTrans Online Map Center: <https://vtransmaps.vermont.gov>. This definition will be in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization update.

Ken Davis made the motion and Kole seconded. All members were in favor.

Larry questioned the inclusion of the word “currently” in the definition.

Motion: To amend the previous definition for “Served by Water and Sewer”: “Any parcel that ~~currently~~ has Town water and sewer connections or is within the limits of the Urban Compact of Hardwick. The map of this area is available for viewing in the municipal office or online from the VTrans Online Map Center: <https://vtransmaps.vermont.gov>. This definition will be in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization update.

Larry Fliegelman made the motion and Kole seconded. All members were in favor.

The Planning Commission discussed forwarding the draft version of the Unified Development Bylaws to the Select Board prior to the HPC hearing in June, 2024. The Commission elected to request that David Upson communicate the availability of the draft version in his Select Board report on April 18, 2024. The draft will be forwarded to the Town Manager’s office once there is a complete draft copy.

Motion: To establish the date for the Hardwick Planning Commission’s public hearing of the proposed changes to the Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws. This hearing will be held on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 at 6:30 pm in the Municipal Building on the third floor.

Shari Cornish made the motion and Ken Davis seconded. All members were in favor.

Phases I and II:

N/A

Motion: N/A

Short Term Rentals:

N/A

Motion: N/A

Flood Hazard Area Overlay Bylaw Update:

Sacha Pealer provided a National Flood Insurance Community Floodplain Management Regulations Review Checklist. Kristen utilized the comments and suggestions included in the checklist to make additional changes to the Flood Hazard Area Overlay. The Planning Commission examined each suggestion and the correlating change in the draft update of the Unified Development Bylaws.

Motion: To accept the proposed changes as recommended by the Floodplain Manager, Sacha Pealer, and as incorporated into the draft version of the Unified Development Bylaws by the Hardwick Zoning and Floodplain Administrator.

Kole made the motion and Shari Cornish seconded. All members were in favor.

Hardwick Ecological Inventory:

The Planning Commission received copies of the Executive Summary of the Hardwick Ecological Inventory. The entire document will be provided once it is finalized by the consulting ecologist and botanist (Matt Peters). This document was a goal in the Hardwick Town Plan and will be immensely useful to the Planning Commission and the Zoning Office. The Hardwick Conservation Commission is willing to meet with the Planning Commission to discuss next steps and implementation. The Zoning Administrator will be utilizing the document when new developments are discussed.

Updates from Commission Members or the Zoning Administrator:

Dave Gross complimented the Downtown Partnership and the excellent work with the eclipse planning. He reminded the Commission that the new Director of the partnership – Jan Mueller – is available to support and assist with aspects that impact the Hardwick downtown.

The Town Manager’s office and the Select Board have requested that the Planning Commission review South Main Street for pedestrian and traffic safety. The Commission will proceed once the weather is cooperating – in May.

Motion: N/A

Motion: To conclude the Hardwick Planning Commission Meeting.

Ken Davis made the motion and Larry Fliegelman seconded. All members were in favor.

The meeting ended at 7:35 pm.

The next HPC meeting will be at 6:30 pm on May 14, 2024 on the 3rd Floor of the Memorial Building and via Zoom.

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA