

Hardwick Planning Commission
January 9, 2018
Hardwick Memorial Building
Minutes

HPC Members Present: Dave Gross, Chair; Ken Davis; Diane Grenkow; Jim Lewis; Joyce Mandeville; and Shawn Ainsworth

HPC members Absent: Cynthia Grant

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

Chair Gross opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Shawn Ainsworth made the motion to approve the agenda as published. Ken Davis seconded. All members were in favor.

Ken Davis moved to approve the November 14, 2017 minutes for the Planning Commission meeting as written, Joyce Mandeville seconded. All members were in favor.

Discussion turned to the Municipal Plan. The data sets are nearing completion and should be ready by the next meeting. The next step is to develop a shared community vision. Kristen gave a summary of the various projects, focus groups, and committees which are already investigating plans for Hardwick's future. These included Community Allies (What do you Love about Hardwick?), GRACE (Arts in Hardwick), Town Forest (Recreation visioning), Downtown Committee, Yellow Barn, Jeudevine Library, Atkins Field, WonderArts, the Recreation Committee, and more. Some projects have already received funding and are pursuing public feedback through a variety of avenues. The recommendation was made that the HPC could utilize the information obtained by these entities. For example, the Town of Hardwick will be hosting a visioning workshop and Open House to collect public input on the future of the Hazen Union and Buffalo Mountain Town Forests (January 24, 6-8 pm at the Hardwick Memorial Building).

Hardwick has engaged in two community visioning exercises in the past 12 years. In 2006, the Creative Community Program identified the following goals for Hardwick: 1) Spruce up the Downtown (accomplished), 2) Develop the Future of the Town House (accomplished), 3) Expand Recreation in Hardwick Lake Area (new access), and 4) Create Business Incubator and Arts Space. In 2016, the Hardwick Community Visit identified four priorities for Hardwick: 1) Open a Recreation Center and Expand Recreation Opportunities, 2) Expand the Jeudevine Library, 3) Enhance Downtown and Build an Economic Development Network, and 4) Build School and Community partnerships.

The Planning Manual from the State of Vermont suggests that Planning Commissions ask people to discuss places in town that they know and like. Rather than hosting more meetings to gather this information, the HPC discussed the feasibility of speaking directly with residents. Venues such as Hazen basketball games, the American Legion, Hazen Social Studies classes, Town Meeting, Buffalo Mountain Coop and more could be utilized to discuss. The traditional advertising approaches can also be incorporated (Facebook, Front Porch Forum, the Gazette, the Town website, flyer to school children) to generate interest. The idea would be to encourage a wide variety of voices and gain more investment in the general planning process.

After much wordsmithing, the phrase, "What places do you love in Hardwick?" was accepted by commission members. A two page inquiry (with a map of Hardwick) is in development and will be reviewed by the

members over the next few weeks and be available at the February meeting. The February meeting will include brainstorming over locations and venues and places to solicit community input.

HPC members were also given a draft version of the Town Report from the zoning department. Members were asked to review and forward comments to the Zoning Administrator.

The next HPC meeting will be on February 13, 2018.

The motion to adjourn was made by Shawn Ainsworth and seconded by Diane Grenkow. All were in favor.

Board adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA