

Hardwick Planning Commission
July 10, 2018
Hardwick Memorial Building
Minutes

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

HPC members Absent: Cynthia Grant

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

Chair Gross opened the meeting at 6:37 pm.

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

Jim Lewis moved to approve the June 12, 2018 minutes as amended. Joyce Mandeville seconded. All members were in favor.

Per the request of the Planning Commission members, the most recent studies of the downtown area were provided for review. Local Motion issued a walking and biking review in November 2017; a VT 15 Transportation Assessment was created in September of 2009, and a Corridor Analysis Study was conducted on Vermont Route 15 in November of 1998. (2017 and 2009 reports are attached). The studies are limited in their scope with a singular component being the focal point (vehicular/traffic versus biking & pedestrian). Similar issues were reiterated in each study (the intersection of VT Route 15 and Route 14). The parking component and connectivity with the future LVRT have not been explored.

The most recent reports (2017 and 2009) both recommended removal of parking spaces in the downtown area to improve bike/pedestrian visibility. The downtown area, however, currently lacks adequate parking/space for customers and for delivery trucks. The suggestion was made to explore the usage of the Hardwick Elementary School parking area after school hours (through signage, etc.). The 2017 Local Motion report suggested the addition of bump-outs and traffic-calming aspects which may impede the movement of through traffic (especially larger trucks). The Commission generally felt that a professional study should be conducted to explore all possible options in the downtown area (parking/bikes/pedestrians/through traffic). The study could also explore the connectivity of the downtown area and the Hardwick Town House/LVRT area.

A motion was made by Diane Grenkow to instruct the Zoning Administrator to gather information on the feasibility of a municipal planning grant for a connectivity study. Joyce Mandeville provided the second. The motion passed with one abstention.

The State of Vermont recently (July 1, 2018) instituted a beneficial habitat standard for pollinator-friendly Solar Arrays. Kristen reviewed the language with the Commission and will disseminate the information to potential developers. The Planning Commission was in general agreement with this approach. There were, however, concerns expressed about the potential cost to developers and about the wisdom of dictating the types of plants on personal property. The information will not be forwarded as a requirement but rather as a resource for the landowner/developer.

The editing of the 2014 Town Plan framework commenced. The removal of vague and state mandated aspects to the goals/policies/etc has begun.

The next HPC meeting will be on August 14, 2018.

The motion to adjourn was made by Joyce Mandeville and seconded by Jim Lewis. All were in favor.

Board adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA