

Hardwick Planning Commission  
April 11, 2023  
Zoom Meeting  
Minutes

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

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator; Tracy Martin, Community Development Coordinator; Heather Carrington, CCDS, LLC Consultant; and Larry Fliegelman, community member.

Absent: None

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:32 pm. Ken Davis moved to approve the agenda as written. Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor. Shari Cornish moved to approve the March 21, 2023 meeting minutes as written. Ken Davis seconded. All members were in favor.

**Updates from the Community Development Coordinator – Tracy Martin:**

*Better Connections Grant and Clean Water Funding*

The Better Connections Grant was received by the Town of Hardwick and will allow the Town to retain a planner to create a comprehensive village plan for East Hardwick (\$67,000). In addition, the Clean Water Funding will support the creation of improved drainage near the Lamoille River Bridge in East Hardwick (\$30,000). This grant is highly competitive and is only received by three Vermont towns on a biennial basis. The receipt of the grant also makes the East Hardwick village center eligible for Downtown Transportation funds.

*Downtown Transportation Grant*

The Town of Hardwick received \$200,000 from the Downtown Transportation Grant funding. This money will assist with the Pedestrian Bridge project. According to the SE Group, the pedestrian bridge project (including the rebuilding of the retaining wall) will cost approximately 1 million. At this time, \$900,000 has been raised for the project. The proposed park project is a separate entity and is not included in these estimates or in the bridge development. Hardwick was eligible for the Downtown Transportation Grant because it recently received the Downtown designation.

***Motion: None***

**Updates from the Bylaw Modernization Consultant – Heather Carrington**

Heather Carrington was introduced to the Hardwick Planning Commission. Heather will be working with the Commission for the next two years to review and update the zoning regulations in Hardwick. This initial visit was primarily focused on logistics and organizational aspects. Heather will attend the May, June, July, and October meetings. In September, November, and December, there will be project management zoom meetings with the Zoning Administrator and the Chair of the Planning Commission.

Two public engagement meetings will be held during the summer months of 2023. These meetings will be in June and August or July and August. Dave Gross recommended the use of the Hardwick Town House as a public engagement location. Both meetings will be interactive (i.e. dot voting) with PowerPoint presentations for information purposes.

Heather will be scheduling a full day site visit in either May or June. This visit will include a review of both East Hardwick and downtown Hardwick.

Currently, there are no housing needs assessments available for Hardwick. Heather will be creating an assessment to assist in the planning process. The background work on the Downtown Designation has indicated that low income/affordable housing exists in the Hardwick center but workforce or missing middle housing is lacking.

Heather will be reaching out to key stakeholders in Hardwick who are either trying to build housing or have already built housing. The Zoning Administrator will forward a list to Heather (*ZA – 13 initial contacts have agreed to be interviewed and have been forwarded to Heather on April 13, 2023*).

Issues, obstacles and opportunities identified by the HPC were as follows:

- Parking and walking issues
- Walkability in both villages
- Accessory Dwelling Unit zoning updates were well received
- Complete Streets will need to be incorporated.

“Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods” has been forwarded electronically to the HPC members. Heather has requested that the Commission review the guide for the May meeting.

Additional questions from the Commission included the following:

- Where can high density housing occur in Hardwick (similar to Morrisville?)
- Is it possible and/or desirable to development certain farmlands?
- What properties are accessible to Town water and sewer in downtown Hardwick and Town water in East Hardwick?

Heather can be reached at [heather@ccdsvt.com](mailto:heather@ccdsvt.com)

***Motion: None***

#### **Hardwick-LVRT Connector Loop Proposal:**

The recommendations from the Planning Commission focus on the short-term aspects. The draft version was reviewed by the Planning Commission. The proposal to the Select Board is designed to satisfy the terms of the USDA Community Facilities Grant that has been transferred from the LVRT work to the Pedestrian Bridge rebuild.

After much discussion, the recommendation to install stop signs at each of the four roads in the Church Street/North Main Street intersection was removed and will be revisited in the later version of the proposal.

***Motion: To forward the Hardwick – LVRT Connector Loop Proposal (as amended) to the Select Board for its consideration of the recommendations.***

The motion was made by Shari Cornish and seconded by Joyce Mandeville. All members were favor. Motion passed.

**Town of Hardwick projects:**

The Lamoille Valley Ford request to purchase property on Treatment Plant Road has been tabled. The engineer retained by Lamoille Valley Ford does not believe that adequate space exists to pursue the original design.

***Motion: None***

**Phase II:**

The Planning Commission will review the concept of the loading and delivery space in downtown Hardwick at a future meeting. The second set of proposals for the Hardwick – LVRT Connector Loop Proposal will be examined at a future meeting as well.

**Updates from Commission Members or the Zoning Administrator:**

None at this time.

***Motion: To conclude the Hardwick Planning Commission Meeting.***

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

The meeting ended at 7:56 pm.

The next HPC meeting will be at 6:30 pm on May 9, 2023 by Zoom

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA