

Hardwick Planning Commission
May 14, 2024
Hybrid – In Person and Via Zoom
Minutes

HPC Members Present: Joyce Mandeville; Shari Cornish; Jim Lewis; Larry Fliegelman (Zoom); Ken Davis; Michael Haveson (Zoom); Kole (2nd Alternate) and Dave Gross, Chair

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

Absent: Bud Stevens (1st Alternate)

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:30 pm. Joyce Mandeville moved to approve the agenda as written. Ken Davis seconded. All members were in favor. Shari Cornish moved to approve the April 9, 2024 meeting minutes. Jim Lewis 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.

Tracy will be submitting a newly created tree planting grant to the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. This grant is being pursued in conjunction with the Downtown Partnership, the Hardwick Conservation Commission and Hardwick's Tree Warden. The grant would provide funds for Hardwick to plant 25 trees in the Downtown area. Tracy requested a letter of support from the Hardwick Planning Commission

Motion: To provide a letter of support for the application to the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission for tree planting funds for the Hardwick Designated Downtown.

Ken Davis made the motion and Shari Cornish seconded. All members were in favor (*KL – the letter has been created and sent to Tracy Martin for the May 17th deadline*).

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 July, Tracy would like to revisit this project with the Planning Commission, because the construction associated with the Jeudevine Library expansion should be nearly complete in August.

Updates from the Bylaw Modernization Consultant – Heather Carrington

Heather provided the draft version of the Planning Report for the Zoning Bylaw update. State Statute requires that this report accompany the proposed bylaws when they are delivered to the regional planning commission, the State of Vermont, and the adjoining towns.

Motion: To approve the draft version of the Planning Report as presented by Heather Carrington and to direct Heather to forward the report with the proposed bylaws to the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development, Northeast Vermont Development Association (NVDA), and the Towns of Wolcott, Walden, Woodbury, Elmore, Stannard, Greensboro, and Cabot.

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

The information about the upcoming June 11, 2024 Public Hearing with the HPC will be posted in the News and Citizen, on the Town website, in the Town building, and on Front Porch Forum. In addition, Kristen will email the information to Paul Fixx for a potential article in the Hardwick Gazette. Later in the summer, late July to early August, there is the possibility that zoning bylaw update information can be included in the tax bills. Kristen will discuss this with the Town Clerk.

Motion: To reverse a portion of the motion made in on April 9, 2024 regarding the amendment of the zoning boundary of the Village Neighborhood zoning district. The proposed amendment will not include the following parcels, which are currently in the Compact Residential zoning district: 09033-0000 (Jacobson & Haley); 09033-00050 (Town of Hardwick).

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

A letter was sent to the owners of the impacted properties to provide additional information and to request any input on the proposed adjustment.

Phases I and II:

Dave Gross suggested that a letter be sent to the Select Board regarding the installation of center lines on less traveled roads. Local Motion has recommended that center lines be left unpainted on narrower, less traveled streets. Studies have shown that traffic can be calmed and will provide additional spaces to pedestrians and bicycles if the center line is not added to the street. After much discussion, the Planning Commission agreed to forward a letter to the Select Board that requests that the town leave the centerline off of North Main Street in Hardwick, Church Street in Hardwick, East Church Street in East Hardwick, and School Street in East Hardwick.

Motion: To send a letter to the Select Board recommending that the center lines not be painted on North Main Street and Church Street in Hardwick and East Church Street and School Street in East Hardwick. This recommendation was included in the studies from Local Motion.

Jim Lewis made the motion and Joyce Mandeville seconded. All members were in favor.

Kristen will draft a letter for the Select Board with this recommendation.

South Main Street is the next section of town that will be reviewed using the AARP Pedestrian Safety Study. The Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, May 28th, at 10 am at the Hardwick Elementary school to review South Main Street.

Short Term Rentals:

N/A

Motion: N/A

Flood Hazard Area Overlay Bylaw Update:

Included in the Zoning Bylaw update on June 11, 2024

Motion: N/A.

Hardwick Ecological Inventory:

N/A

Updates from Commission Members or the Zoning Administrator:

Dave Gross introduced the new Director of the Downtown partnership – Jan Mueller.

The Pedestrian Bridge has been posted for construction bids. The project will be able to begin by July 1, 2024.

The next update for the HPC to consider will be the River Corridor.

Motion: N/A

Motion: To conclude the Hardwick Planning Commission Meeting.

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

The meeting ended at 7:35 pm.

The next HPC meeting will be at 6:30 pm on June 11, 2024 on the 3rd Floor of the Memorial Building and via Zoom. This will be the public hearing for the Zoning Bylaw updates.

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA