



RUTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall – 52 Washington St. – Rutland, VT 05701
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4/15/15

Minutes April 15, 2015

Present: Dave Coppock (DC), Susan Schreibman (SS), Larry Walter (LW) and Patrick Griffin (PG).

Also attending: Brennan Duffy, Executive Director RRA and Alderman Chris Siliski (at 7:50 pm.)

DC, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

- I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS** – Barbara Spaulding requested the addition of the Designated Downtown Capital Improvement Program/Budget to New Business.
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 25, 2015.**

SS moved to approve the minutes of March 25, 2015. LW seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. NEW BUSINESS.

Downtown Gateway Study Update – Brennan Duffy led the discussion with a brief history of the project. A Steering Committee of himself, Ed Bove and Michael Coppinger have discussed the final draft of the study created by LandWorks and RSG and believe it fulfills the obligations of the grant. A final presentation is scheduled for 6 pm on April 29 at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission conference room in the Opera House, third floor. Brennan has invited the Board of Aldermen and various stakeholders who have been involved in the study.

SS said she believed some of the mid-term initiatives, like bike lane striping, should be reclassified as short-term and questioned whether the recommendations in the study should be added to the Master Plan. Brennan said it is not necessary. SS also suggested making the consultant aware that the reference to the Transportation Enhancements Grants is inaccurate as that funding source has been changed to Transportation Alternatives.

Brennan said the study has already been used to apply for grant funds for pedestrian safety improvements in the Strongs Avenue Gateway. PG asked for a

copy of the plan and will be forwarded a link to the drop box. Following the final presentation the plan will be made available on the RRA website.

Designated Downtown Capital Improvement Program and Budget – Barbara explained that the Community and Economic Development Committee of the Board of Aldermen met last week to review the program and budget which requires a public hearing before the Alderman can formally adopt. The Committee asked that the Planning Commission review the program and budget and provide any comments necessary. The program and budget are a requirement to re-designate the City's downtown. The Commission discussed the various projects for FY15-FY20 and no formal action was taken.

Master Plan Amendment proposal to include bike route language – SS confirmed that bike route language, as well as, Complete Streets are included in the City's Master Plan and no amendment is necessary.

Paving Priorities from DPW – DC said he was unable to meet with the Mayor prior to this meeting to discuss the need for the list of DPW paving priorities in order for the Commission to make recommendations for Complete Streets. SS distributed copies of a list of Bike Route signs. She said the current signs are out of compliance with MUTCD guidelines revised in 2009. New bike route signs are required to be retro-reflective. There is still a great deal of work to be done to complete the list. The Commissioners offered to assist.

Brennan asked about costs of signage and funding sources and if there was a penalty for non-compliance. SS replied she was unaware of potential costs and penalties do not exist but the City could be liable if there is an accident. DC added that the signs make a difference to the quality of life, are an economy booster and the investment would make Rutland more vital. PG discussed prioritizing the list by quadrant and finding funding to purchase the signs in bulk.

Dorr Drive Repaving Project – SS discussed the City's Municipal Highway Grant Application to VTrans for a Class 2 Roadway. The project consists of reclaiming and repaving Dorrr Drive. The Aldermen were asked to sign a resolution in support of the project. Alderman Etti asked if the project included bike/ped plans and he was told it did not. The resolution was approved with Etti voting no. SS followed up with City Engineer Jim Rotondo and was told the road costs were still unknown and potentially the road would have the same footprint due to cost. SS said cost is not a reason to not comply with Complete Streets State law and if there was a poster child for a Complete Streets project, Dorrr Drive is the project. She suggested if the application is funded the grant agreement should require the City to address Complete Streets as part of State law.

SS will be conducting a Complete Streets presentation for the Board of Aldermen on April 20 in hopes the Board will review grant applications in a different way.

The RRPC has written a letter to the Board of Highway Commissioners and Susan contacted VTrans directly to inquire whether Complete Streets law is a factor in determining which projects are funded. She was told that there are no Complete Streets police.

Brennan voiced concern that calls to VTrans by Susan could make the City's application for paving funds less competitive and suggested that these types of concerns should be kept in house.

PG suggested asking for a copy of the application and pdf of the plans to see exactly what the DPW is proposing.

DC offered to draft a letter on behalf of the Planning Commission to the Board of Highway Commissioners regarding the Complete Streets law. He will circulate the draft to the Commissioners for comment.

V. OLD BUSINESS.

West Street Pedestrian Assessment - SS said the wrap-up meeting was held April 14 and it would be a month out to complete the report. It is anticipated that participation in the assessment will make the City more competitive for future grants.

Municipal Planning Grant/Zoning Rewrite - DC suggested submitting a grant application to assist the future City Zoning Administrator/Planner in re-writing the current zoning bylaws. Barbara said a resolution in support of the application would need to be signed by the Board of Aldermen. SS said the RRPC could help file the grant. PG offered to transcribe Alvin's longhand revisions to the Downtown Gateway Districts.

DC suggested the Commissioners review Article II of the Zoning Bylaws for discussion at their May meeting.

25mph Speed Limit Update - DC said the Mayor should know that the Planning Commission is in favor of the city-wide 25mph speed limit and it could be added to the draft letter to the Board of Highway Commissioners.

SS said she made presentations to the Aldermen, RRA, REDC, DRP and in the neighborhoods and the results of these presentations will be reported to the Board of Aldermen as not controversial. Brennan questioned how this conclusion was made as the RRA was not in favor of a 25mph reduction city-wide as presented. He stated the RRA did understand the reduction in certain high-density areas of the City like the Downtown.

PG suggested that the letter focus on the Dorr Drive project and Complete Streets and not address the speed limit reduction specifically.

Larry asked if he was allowed to include his position as a Commissioner when writing a letter to the editor. He was told that was a question for the City Attorney.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE – NONE.

VIII. ADJOURN.

SS moved to adjourn. PG seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:02 pm.

For the Commission
Barbara Spaulding, Recording Secretary