



RUTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall – 52 Washington St. – Rutland, VT 05701
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 969 – Rutland, VT 05702
Phone: 802-773-1800

Minutes January 10, 2018

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

Also Present: Tara Kelly, Zoning Administrator; Juli Beth Hinds, Birchline Planning (formerly of Orion Planning & Design); Dave Cooper and Brennan Duffy, Zoning Bylaws Advisory Group; and Barbara Spaulding, recording secretary.

SS, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS – None.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 6, 2017.

PG moved to approve the minutes of December 6, 2017. DC seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. OLD BUSINESS – Zoning Bylaws Advisory Group.

Juli Beth distributed copies of a memo for the purposes of the meeting. She recapped the zoning rewrite strategy and history. Tara added that half of the draft ordinance is completed, map work has been done by the Planning Commission and work continues on the site plan standards.

Juli Beth said there were four sections to the rewrite: Chapter 117 authority, set by the State; Uses/Districts; Procedures; Design Site Plan Standards. The goal for this meeting is to discuss procedural issues and develop or redevelop Standards.

The Standards are for overall community character, but also to protect the investment of adjacent property owners. Tara discussed three current commercial development projects and how the current zoning affected the applicants' ability to prepare site plans.

Juli Beth discussed the difference between engineered site plans, which are not required by state statute, and site plans that require utilities, traffic and are drawn to scale. PG asked how someone would know if the plan was drawn to scale. Juli Beth suggested there are readily available tools, including Google Earth.

Discussion continued with the types of approvals: No Permit Required (for "benign" uses), Zoning Permit, Site Plan Review (appealable), and Administrative Site Plan (ZA approval with requirement to be on the DRB consent agenda). Dave Cooper asked about

the difference between a meeting and a hearing. Juli Beth responded that a hearing required more time to schedule due to required notice period and need to advertise in newspaper. She added that hearings are also open to more procedural appeals than a site plan review in the context of the meeting.

Juli Beth said that the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is an advisory body that does not issue an appealable decision. The ARC makes recommendations to decision makers (either ZA or DRB) on referred projects. Applicants are not obligated to use the recommendation and it is not legally binding unless it becomes integrated into the permit decision of the ZA or DRB.

PG asked who currently covers subdivisions. Tara said although the Subdivision Regulations have not been amended to change language, the DRB currently reviews subdivisions.

Juli Beth explained the site plan review process as presented in the memo. The option presented for projects going through Site Plan Review included an Administrative Site Plan for minor projects. There was a question as to what constitutes a “minor change.” Language is being drafted for further discussion in the future. For the purposes of this discussion that issue was set aside.

The role of ARC review was discussed. The following comments were made:

- The flexibility of words like “may” creates pressure on ZA, needs to be more clearly defined.
- Concern ARC would need to meet frequently to keep applications moving in a timely manner
- Parameters are needed to guide ZA discretion
- Single meetings are more business friendly
- Informal meetings need more criteria
- Applicants are not required to attend ARC meetings
- Standards need to be defined for Gateway projects
- DRB should receive input from ARC on projects in all Gateways and Historic Districts
- Change name of Committee to the Design Review Committee (DRC)
- Better criteria, less ARC review needed
- Design review should be included on Routes 4/7 and Strongs Avenue.

Juli Beth conducted an exercise using Dollar General building examples to determine the Committee’s thoughts with regard to regulating site and building design components including site layout, landscaping and features, and building design and materials. The Committee was asked to think about relevant features within high visibility districts versus others; and to think about whether ARC needed to weigh in or DRB should handle without referral to ARC.

The PowerPoint presentation included visuals showing Trash Enclosures, Screening; Parking, Pedestrian/Bike Circulation; Snow Storage; Lighting; Connectors to Adjacent

Parcels; Utility Cabinets, Circulation, Parking Lot Landscaping; and Gas Station Canopies.

PG asked about reviewing curb cuts. Currently the DPW Commissioner permits these based largely upon traffic safety. A 30ft. maximum width was discussed.

V. CORRESPONDENCE.

PG moved to receive and file the following correspondence. DC seconded. Motion was approved.

Notice of Appeal, 12/29/17, City of Rutland, 1272 Order-Permit No. 3-185, Combined Sewer Water.

VI. ADJOURN.

PG moved to adjourn. The meeting ended at 7:27 pm. The next meeting will be held February 28, 2018.

For the Commission:

Barbara Spaulding, Recording Secretary