



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

Meeting Minutes January 25, 2023

Present: Rebecca Mattis (RM), Sarah Roy (SR), *David O'Brien and Pat Griffin (PG).

Also Present: Alderman Mike Doenges, Devon Neary, Andrew Strniste Planning & Zoning Administrator, Barbara Spaulding recording secretary and John Ruggiero.

Absent: Alvin Figiel (AF).

RM, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

- I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS – None.**
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 11, 2023.**

RM moved to approve the minutes of January 11, 2023. PG seconded. Motion was approved.

- IV. NEW BUSINESS – None.**
- V. OLD BUSINESS – Better Connections Grant.**

Devon presented the Better Connections Program and how other towns have utilized the funding for their projects. He had already made a presentation to the RRA Board and will make another to the Community & Economic Development Committee on the upcoming Thursday.

*David O'Brien arrived.

Devon discussed how the City would benefit from a Bike/Ped Master Plan that includes facilities and amenities for both walking and bicycling in Rutland. He discussed the process for hiring a consultant(s) to perform the public engagement piece and the need for municipal and public input. Devon stressed the need for the Planning Commission to be engaged. RM asked how this relates to the City Master Plan. Devon said the proposed bike/ped plan would complement the master plan, as well as, be referenced in it, but the City Master Plan is a high level document. The bike/ped plan would provide more relevant details. DO asked if the plan would create "shovel in the ground" projects. Devon explained that while the plan would include conceptual designs, they would not be engineering level. The plan would act as an accelerant for implementation projects and unlock public funding. Andrew added that it would parlay with the Complete Streets document which is due for an update. PG asked if the City's DPW would have a role in the bike/ped planning. There was discussion regarding getting the DPW's support for the

proposed plan based on their limited consideration of the Complete Streets Guidance Document. Devon explained the difference between the two documents. PG asked how would the scope be limited. Devon said the scope would focus on the Downtown, but also produce a list of projects city-wide with assistance from the RRPC who could provide in-kind support. Barbara asked for a motion to allow the Chair to sign the resolution on behalf of the Planning Commission in support of the grant application. PG so moved. SR seconded. Motion was approved.

Proposed Zoning Bylaws draft review – Discussion of use chart and review of zoning map.

Andrew distributed copies of PG's research on various definitions.

RM suggested starting the discussion with the definition of Light Industry which includes therein as not needing special power, water or waste treatment. The definitions included in PG's research for Light Industry concentrate on the effects on the surrounding neighborhood from smoke, gas, odor, dust, noise, vibration and lighting. RM proposed a medium industrial zone to promote vitality in certain areas. Andrew read the definition for medium industry in the APA Planning Dictionary, which stated: "enterprises in which goods are generally massed produced from raw materials on a large scale for the use of an assembly line process usually for sale to wholesalers or other industrial and manufacturing uses. Medium industry produces moderate external effects such as smoke, noise, soot, dirt, vibration and odor." The consensus was that definition is not what was wanted. Andrew then read a definition of light industry within the Planning Dictionary as "enterprises engaging in the processing, manufacturing, compounding, assembly, treatment, or fabrication of materials and products from processed and previously manufactured materials. Light Industry is capable of operations to control the external effects of the manufacturing process such as smoke, noise, dirt, vibration etc." RM suggested renaming Light Industry to Cottage Industry. Andrew said the City's zoning regulations currently has a cottage industry definition that was removed by Brandy in the proposed zoning. Andrew read the definition of Cottage Industry in the current zoning regulations as "establishments primarily engaged in the onsite production of goods by hand manufacturing within enclosed structures that involve the use of hand tools or small mechanical equipment which does not result in noise, fumes or storage that extend beyond the structure where the work is occurring." RM suggested using the definition of Cottage Industry as Light Industry and write a new definition for Light Industry that includes the definition researched by PG.

John Ruggiero asked where Light Industry uses would be permitted. Andrew said heavy industry is only permitted in the General Commercial zoning district, located at end of Park Street, along a stretch of West Street, railroad tracks near Curtis. PG said he believes the area of Granger Street where commercial and residential co-exist would be an area for Light Industry, as an example.

Following discussion by the Commission, the consensus was that RM would write and propose a new definition for Light Industry for the current use chart for the next meeting that will be vetted by the Commission.

RM asked the Commission to consider a 5,000 sq. ft. maximum, restricted to the first floor for retail shop in the Courthouse District. The Commission discussed the size required vs. potential number of customers and used Google Maps to review the sizes of buildings in the Courthouse district. Andrew suggested adding a regulatory option under specific use standards that address small retail as on the first floor, face the street and add specific regulations. RM said she would prepare a definition for mini-retail in the historic districts to include 4,000 sq. ft. maximum and specific use standards.

PG discussed a micro-craft food processing use and whether to add the use to the table where it would be allowed or to have a level where it would be exempt if it is small-scale. He said that it would fit in the mixed-use district. RM said microbrewery is allowed in all districts, with some level of site plan review, except residential, civic and park. She said the micro craft food processing use could be handled the same way. PG said there should be an exemption for mini food producers based on gross sales for the year. He proposed that mini food producers who produce less than \$10,000 in sales should be exempt. Andrew said the definition for catering and commercial kitchen may apply. Discussion continued regarding whether the establishment is state licensed or needs to be licensed. Andrew said subsection B needs to be clarified. RM suggested removing subsection B. PG suggested increasing the total sales to \$25,000. Andrew suggested staying as close to state statute as possible. RM said she will work with PG and Andrew to create a definition for the next meeting.

Andrew proposed discussion of the Public Indoor Recreation uses. He said the Commission was more lenient with public outdoor recreation than commercial outdoor recreation. Andrew asked if the Commission wants the government to be able to more easily place a public indoor recreation facility in a district rather than a commercial indoor rec facility. DO argued that what exists is not the argument for moving forward. SR discussed the difference between public and commercial recreation uses being the cost related to accessibility of the facility and said public should be less restrictive than commercial. Andrew asked SR if commercial indoor facility would need an extra layer of review by the DRB. RM said it would come down to a vote in the R5, R7 and Gateway Business and Mixed Use districts. She also discussed the increased traffic for indoor recreation for both public and commercial recreation. SR advocated for increased public indoor recreation. RM suggested revisiting the issue at the next meeting.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE – None.

VII. ADJOURN – RM moved to adjourn. PG seconded. Motion was approved. The meeting ended at 7:02 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting is February 8 in the HUB.

For the Commission: Barbara Spaulding, Recording Secretary