



RUTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall – 52 Washington St. – Rutland, VT 05701
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 969 – Rutland, VT 05702
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Meeting Minutes November 10, 2021

The meeting was held in person and by teleconference because of the new COVID-19 protocols.

Present: Patrick Griffin (PG), Alvin Figiel (AF), Rebecca Mattis (RM) and Sarah Roy (SR).

Absent: Dave O'Brien.

Also Present: Andrew Strniste Planning & Zoning Administrator and Barbara Spaulding recording secretary.

Due to technical difficulties RM, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:53 pm.

- I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS – None.**
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 27, 2021.**

AF moved to approve the minutes of October 27, 2021. SR seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. OLD BUSINESS – Draft Zoning Bylaws Update process.

Andrew discussed where the Commission left off at the last meeting saying they could consider creating a new district for the Route 4/7 area making all uses conditional or creating an overlay district for that area. He proceeded to discuss potential examples using the 34 North Main Street vacant lot.

Discussion continued on how to determine when an administrative review vs. review by the DRB is appropriate and whether “major renovation of an existing structure with a footprint greater than 500 sq. ft.” is the correct qualifier. RM suggested the determination be made by the impacts of a proposed project. SR asked whether the 500 sq. ft. refers to renovation or building size. Andrew explained the need to remove subjectivity and create less gray area so that decisions hold up when challenged. He suggested that the Commission decide which uses they want the DRB to review. AF suggested all projects in the design overlay district should be reviewed by the DRB. Discussion continued regarding whether an architectural review can stand alone. RM asked whether the Commission wants the regulations to be applied to new projects or to some extent, to clean up prior mistakes or existing uses. Andrew said the regulations need to be clear, concise, impactful and without ambiguity. He went on to describe projects where there is ambiguity.

The Commission discussed the importance between “waiver” vs. modification. Andrew said waivers typically have to do with setbacks and modifications allow for deviations from the regulations imposed by DRB. AF said the draft currently has landscaping plans and parking standards but questioned when they are triggered and whether zoning can rectify existing situations. SR said that the triggers to correct property issues might provide an impetus for other property owners to make improvements.

Andrew continued to provide examples of how the conversion of use triggers changes and that only the requirement of a permit initiates changes. The Commission discussed how the DRB can also issue conditions of approval on permits that are tied to the regulations and the master plan. RM suggested reaching out to the DRB and ask what types of projects they feel can be reviewed by the Administrator and which should always go before the DRB. RM agreed to reach out and added that deciding what constitutes a major and minor project is most important.

- V. **ADJOURN** – AF moved to adjourn. SR seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 6:56 pm. The next regular meeting will be held December 8, 2021.

For the Commission: Barbara Spaulding, Recording Secretary