



RUTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

P.O. BOX 969
RUTLAND, VT 05702

Minutes October 28, 2020

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

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

Also Present: Alderman Michael Talbott, Tara Kelly, Planning Director and Zoning Administrator, Brandy Saxton of Place Sense, Brennan Duffy and Dave Cooper of the Rutland Redevelopment Authority and Barbara Spaulding, recording secretary.

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

- I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS** – SS suggested moving New Business to the end of the agenda.
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 23, 2020.**

AF moved to approve the minutes of September 23, 2020. PG seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

*Larry Walter and Dave Coppock arrived.

IV. OLD BUSINESS – Draft Zoning Bylaws with Brandy Saxton.

Due to audio issues the opening remarks made by both Tara and Brandy were inaudible. The meeting resumed but there were continued audio issues.

SS suggested that everyone introduce themselves to Brandy prior to continuing.

Tara discussed the history of the draft zoning bylaws with consultant Juli Beth Hinds who prepared the draft that the Planning Commission has been reviewing. She added that Brandy was hired to help with design standards and neighborhood density, two controversial topics that would require public outreach and discussion.

Brandy said she is hoping to get familiar with working with the Planning Commission and outlined her next steps. She proposed to start with the Site Design and Performance Standards which were forwarded to the Planning Commission. Tara said the strategy was to start with Planning Commission working through the draft site standards before bringing the revised and refined language to the larger committee in order to use the ZBAG more effectively as step one of a multi-step process.

SS said that the Commission had not received the documents being referred to and asked that they be emailed again and a new meeting be set up.

Brennan said he would hate to see the Planning Commission spend time and effort on the proposed zoning without the ZBAG being involved early in the discussion.

Brandy responded that it was important to move into specifics of language, which is a challenge in zoning, with a manageable sized committee of no more than 12.

PG asked whether the project will include public feedback and input to further work through the issues. Brandy said the public engagement process has to be reconsidered due to COVID and she had suggested earlier on that the project consider video tours of neighborhoods to be made available to the public to view.

Dave Cooper asked if this was the best use of Brandy's time and thought perhaps she should focus on providing a working document in which 90% is non-controversial and the remaining 10% would be worked through. He added that the zoning is easier to amend than to adopt.

Brandy responded that the Governor passed S237, a provision relevant to housing decisions that in affect dictates what the City can do in its zoning bylaws.

SS asked if it was possible to add the Site Design and Performance Standards to the draft zoning ordinance and then have the Commission review. Brandy said it was not clear which of the standards to include and which version of the zoning document to use.

SS suggested that the Commission review the Standards provided by Brandy before the next meeting and work together with the ZBAG through the different scenarios.

Dave Cooper said the draft zoning document is needed as soon as possible and he encouraged the Planning Commission to dig in and provide a draft so discussions are productive.

Brennan Duffy added that the Municipal Planning Grant paying for Brandy's time has been offered an extension and he feels this is warranted. Tara said there may also need to be a change in the scope of work regarding the public engagement piece.

SS said copies of the Site Design and Performance Standards will be sent out prior to the next meeting and she encouraged inclusion of the ZBAG at that meeting in order to create a less contentious document that would be easily adopted.

Alvin spoke in opposition to the larger group and suggested that the Architectural Review Committee weigh in when that topic is discussed and the DRB weigh in during the discussion relative to them.

The next meeting was set for November 11 at 5:30 pm.

The Commission discussed which version of the zoning document was provided to Brandy. The following list of requests would be made of Tara:

- Copies of the Site Design and Performance Standards provided by Brandy, and
- A draft zoning document that includes Juli Beth Hinds version with the Planning Commission's edits and the current amendments.

Discussion continued regarding the draft zoning bylaws being presented as a new document and not to be compared to the 2014 version.

V. ADJOURN – PG moved to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:03 pm. The next meeting will be held November 11, 2020.

For the Commission: Barbara Spaulding, Recording Secretary