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HUNTINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of November 26, 2012

PRESENT: Dana Cummings, Everett Marshall, Knox Cummin, Ginger Lubkowitz, Julia Austin, Gordon Miller

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Heather Pembrook, Kathy Barron, Morris Knight, Rich Lachapelle, Lori Nyland

MINUTES: Ginger Lubkowitz/Heidi Racht

Agenda

6:30 MEETING BEGINS

6:30 Recommendation to Selectboard for Planning Commission appointment
Town Plan Public Discussion on Planning Topics

8 pm Public Comment (Kathy Barron is coming in to discuss a transfer of property to a neighbor)

8:15 Minutes of October 22
Minutes of November 8
Mail

8:30 Village Hill Preliminary Subdivision Review - postponed from November 8, due to lack of quorum

9:15 Member Business / continuation of 8 pm agenda items
Discuss and schedule Village Code Public Hearing

9:30 Adjourn

At 6:38 pm, the meeting was called to order, chaired by Dana Cummings. Ginger Lubkowitz offered to serve as clerk because Heidi Racht was still at the Selectboard meeting.

Dana Cummings explained that Heather Pembrook has volunteered to fill Tom Bailey's vacancy until Town Meeting Day and that the Selectboard would be considering her appointment at their concurrent meeting, pending a recommendation from the Commission.

MOTION: Knox Cummin moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the Selectboard appoint Heather Pembrook to fill the vacancy on the Planning Commission until Town Meeting 2013; Ginger Lubkowitz seconded.

The motion to recommend the appointment of Heather Pembrook to fill the vacancy on the Planning Commission until Town Meeting Day was approved unanimously.

Cummings stepped out to the town office to inform the Selectboard of this recommendation for anticipated approval at their 7 pm meeting.

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| Town Plan Discussion | Historic Features: The Commission discussed the need to identify and inventory archeological sites; this would fall under "implementation." Dana Cummings also recommended for an item under "implementation" creating a "community guide" and including archeological and historical sites. |
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Julia Austin observed that the goals in the existing town plan are not measurable and actionable as they should be.

Discussion ensued about encouraging use/reuse of historic structures. To what degree is this something that the Commission wants to pursue – is this something that the town is interested in? As one way to assess that and other items in this section, Cummings recommended a joint meeting with HHCT, open to the public.

7 pm Everett Marshall arrived at the meeting.

Knox Cummin noted that, at the last meeting, the Commission discussed editing Goal 2 to substitute “Town Hall” for Union Meeting House (UMH), though the plan should include reference to continuing the use of the UMH as library and for community events etc.

Cummings noted that other towns have historic district overlays, not just of particular areas, but of any place where an historic structure is located. The Commission agreed that it should discuss with the Vermont State Historic Preservation Trust, the practice of including structures outside of a particular district; i.e., including structures near a house. This topic would relate to an implementation item: Work with HHCT to update Vermont Division of Historic Preservation’s inventory of historic places in Huntington.

Economic Planning: Knox Cummin noted that Western Slopes Business Association (formerly RABA) has done an inventory of businesses in town; the Commission could have a joint meeting with them.

Dana Cummings recommended having a public session on economic/business development in Huntington.

Heather Pembroke noted that broadening the tax base does not always lead to lower taxes. Cummings agreed, recommending the Commission may want to frame a discussion as exploring how to broaden tax base without having to increase services.

Heidi Racht arrived and Heather Pembroke signed her oath to officially become a member of the HPC!

Racht took over as clerk.

Further discussion on Economic Planning, included Huntington’s website could have a listing of business in Huntington and information about doing business in Huntington. Western Slopes has a business listing to some degree but not by town, rather by service. Racht mentioned that she has a list of businesses in town (~50) but that it hasn’t ever been put on the website; this

could be discussed with the website committee.

Everett Marshall noted that “eco-tourism” opportunities abound in Huntington but aren’t marketed.

Marshall then suggested that middle school and high school students could meet with a civics teacher to work with the town to inventory community economic resources to entice parent involvement. Cummings added that some schools have placed-based educators who use the opportunity to have students get involved: kids did an inventory of older houses and buildings.

Ginger Lubkowitz offered to check with BPMS principal Gail Webb to see if something could be worked out.

Heather Pembroke observed that the 14 recommendations in this section could be more condensed.

The group then discussed the Revolving Loan Fund, which had been set up to accept funds from the repayment of the Fuller House federal grant and then provide low-interest loans to local businesses. After the Huntington RLF Committee became moribund, the management of the money was transferred to the Vermont Community Fund and it seems to have disappeared from public consciousness.

Cummings remarked, “We need a vision. This section [economic] needs a lot of work.”

Pembroke mentioned the Chamber of Commerce as a resource – Vermont has the Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce, which deals with business in the more populated areas of the county. Marshall was concerned about values, especially as it relates to the National Chamber of Commerce, which is a conservative political action committee. Pembroke replied that the local organization might have a “formula for small businesses to survive.”

Julia Austin volunteered to make contacts with LCCC and bring information to a future meeting.

The Commission then discussed the recent defeat at the polls of the revisions to the Richmond Zoning Ordinance. Knox Cummin said that “Some people felt that it discouraged business.” Dana Cummings remarked that the Commission should be “making sure there’s coherence between the zoning regs and encouraging business.” However, he noted, “keep in mind that many people like Huntington the way it is.” Marshall added, “You can change the business opportunity without changing the community.”

Pembroke said that Starksboro has a maximum number of new building permits. Cummings replied that it is “an interesting way to avoid boom/bust”

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| | <p>cycles in a community.</p> <p>Transportation Planning: Among the many topics covered in this section, roads and bridges, as well as means of transportation, were discussed.</p> <p>Among the goals discussed was maintaining the town's roads and bridges in good working condition.</p> <p>Everett Marshall said that the overall picture for this section is to include public transportation, which would include a multi-modal model of carpooling, buses and pedestrian and walking opportunities. Heather Pembroke talked about bus routes and noted that there could be an opportunity to have a route that swings over from Hinesburg to Richmond.</p> <p>Dana Cummings opined that the section "lacks vision" and a goal should be to research "safe, effective and cost efficient" transportation options.</p> <p>Julia Austin said she thought that village-based code addresses some of the issues raised in this section. Pembroke said that the town should promote safe vehicular and alternative transportation. Cummings added that mixed use should be a goal, to which Austin then noted that this would tie in with ecotourism.</p> <p>Cummings noted that Huntington was "underappreciated for recreational lodging opportunities."</p> <p>The discussion then went on to the topic of the CESU school buses and ridership. Marshall suggested that towns could provide incentives for people to ride the bus.</p> <p>At 8 pm, Dana Cummings left the meeting to go to the Selectboard meeting to make a supplemental budget request.</p> |
| <p>Public Comment</p> | <p>Kathy Barron appeared before the Commission to discuss her property on Bridge Street in the Lower Village. Barron would like to sell acreage to Peter Purinton, who is currently raising Christmas trees on part of it. Barron would like to keep 1.5 to 1.75 acres for her own use; she plans to build a single-family residence.</p> <p>After a short discussion and a consultation of the Subdivision Regulations, the Commission determined that Barron did not have to go through subdivision, based on Article 9 (Definitions) Subdivision Section 4B. Although review is required under Article 2, the following shall not be considered to constitute "subdivision," nor shall any such conveyance be considered in determining whether the subdivision is a major subdivision or a minor subdivision: ... (b) lots for agriculture, forestry or conservation - transfer or lease of land solely for commercial forestry or agricultural purposes or solely for land conservation,</p> |

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| | <p>provided appropriate restrictions are inserted into the deed or the lease for agricultural, forestry or conservation purposes which waive development rights until and unless subdivision review occurs.</p> <p>Barron will need to have a restrictive deed where Purinton will need to go through subdivision should he wish to change the use and put a residence on it or other development of the property.</p> <p>She then went on to say that she had spoken to Everett Marshall within the context of his work and he had assured her that the property was not near a deeryard (deer wintering area). Marshall replied that there are no natural resources constraints from Barron's proposed site of the residence on the property that she is retaining.</p> |
| Minutes of October 22, 2012 | <p>Motion: Everett Marshall moved to approve the minutes of October 22, 2012 with changes; seconded by Ginger Lubkowitz.</p> <p>The minutes were approved, with Heather Pembrook abstaining.</p> |
| Minutes of November 12, 2012 | <p>Motion: Knox Cummin moved to approved the minutes of November 12, 2012 with changes; seconded by Everett Marshall.</p> <p>The minutes were approved with two abstentions (Pembrook and Austin).</p> |
| Village Hill Preliminary Subdivision Review | <p>Before the Subdivision Review began, Morris Knight expressed his great displeasure about the late notice of the meeting that came in the form of the HPC's agenda on Monday afternoon. Lori Nyland added that she, too, was unhappy about the notice. Clerk Heidi Racht responded that she had noticed that the agenda hadn't gone out when Kathy Barron called to get on it earlier in the day and she looked up when Public Comment was scheduled. Realizing that it hadn't gone out, she emailed it. Apologies were made and blame was accepted. The discussion continued for a while longer with the attendees remarking that they felt that they should have been given written warning about the rescheduled preliminary review. After all, how were they to know that the hearing had been rescheduled? It was mentioned that, at the last meeting where a quorum had not been present to conduct the review, the hearing had been rescheduled to the next meeting and they would be contacted earlier in the evening, if the Commission again did not have a quorum.</p> <p>At 8:40 pm, Dana Cummings returned to the meeting and resumed the chair.</p> <p>Knox Cumming recused himself as a member of the Commission for this project review.</p> <p>The review began with introductions. Cummings asked the applicant, Knox Cummin, to give an overview of the project.</p> <p>Cummin summarized: The proposed subdivision will have eight houses that are accessed by a peripheral road, which has an access to the Main Road.</p> |

There are garden lots to go with each house. The project will have a shared septic with a mowed lawn.

The project is a Planned Residential Development (PRD) clustered on 6.09 acres and Cummin was going for the PRD bonus.

The project meets the 50-foot setback for the wetland; there is no longer a deeryard (deer wintering area) setback.

At the request of the neighbors, Cummin said he plans to plant screening on the north and south edges of the property.

As shown on the project plat, there is a 10-foot strip of land on the south side of the property that connects two larger pieces that Cummin will retain. A portion of the land, mainly on the west side of the property, is in Current Use. Cummin mentioned that the property to the north of the development could be used as a possible site for town septic; this is not in Current Use.

Morris Knight asked about stormwater run-off, which is shown on the site plan. Cummin replied that this would not be needed and since the impervious surfaces were below the state regulations. It would be removed on the subsequent version of the plan.

There then followed a long discussion about the density bonus, which Cummin had figured for eight houses on eight acres and then subtract the 25 percent to come up with the 6.09 acres; he thought six acres were needed for the project. Everett Marshall said that the bonus needed to be figured the other way and that the amount of land needed for the project was 6.4 acres. After consulting the regs, the Commission determined that 6.4 acres were needed. Cummin remarked that this had come up at Sketch Plan and the density bonus, as agreed to at that time, had been figured the way that he had it in his plan; however, he would make the change.

In answer to a question about the screening, Cummin said that the screening plantings would not be made on berms. He also said that a half acre would be designated for agricultural use and would be controlled by the owner of Lot 1.

Heather Pembroke asked about the road maintenance; it was confirmed that this would be done through a homeowners association. She asked about communal property, to which Cummin replied that there were three dual-owner garages.

Pembroke asked about exterior street lighting and Cummin stated that there were none planned.

Marshall mentioned affordable housing, noting that the density bonus was 1.5. Cummin replied that the houses would have solar panels and be "super-

insulated,” which “can’t be done for an affordable price.” Julia Austin then commented that it would be nice to have a renewable energy bonus.

In other discussion, Cummin said:

1. all the roofs will have solar panels;
2. there will be limited geothermal around the footing; and
3. the residences will be 1300-1800 square feet;

Dana Cummings said he was concerned about the lack of a lighting plan. “People would expect lighting for safety and security. Pembroke talked about the lighting that serves the Huntington Park and Ride. Knox Cummin said that studies show that people prefer to break-in on in a place that is somewhat lit.” Heidi Racht replied that most people don’t want lights. Again, Cummings expressed concern that a Homeowners Association might decide at the last minute to add lighting. There was more discussion on the intensity of the lights; the regs were noted to state that there would be no more than two lumens at the edge of the property. Cummin agreed to look at lighting.

Marshall asked for the wildlife review letter. Cummin said he would bring it in.

Pembroke asked if culverts were needed and Cummin replied that when he and Andy Palmer had applied for the initial driveway permit, Road Foreman Yogi Alger had said one wasn’t needed since the property was flat. He then explained that there would be a path inside the stonewall for residents to travel safely down the road toward the village. Also, the project would have have paths connecting areas within the property.

Cummings asked about overshadowing issues for well shields. He suggested that it “shouldn’t just be the letter of the law and neighbors who would be affected should be contacted.” Cummin replied, “It is centered [on the property and from there] uphill to the neighbors, so there should not be an issue.”

Rich Lachapelle asked about the acreage and Cummin acknowledged that he would need to add acreage to the project from the land he planned to retain.

Pembroke asked about access to potential Phase II. Cummin explained that there were dead-end roads; however, Village Code may be an issue with this since the plan shows a road through the property to by-pass the village.

After further discussion about waivers and the density bonus, Cummin said he would look into affordable housing.

The Commission reviewed the checklist for Major Subdivision Preliminary Review. Marshall asked about delineation of the wetland. Cummin asked about the markers for the site inspection: building envelopes, water, driveway.

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| | <p>All areas met subdivision codes and were deemed acceptable.</p> <p>Heidi Racht brought up phase-in, explaining that all the previous projects of this size had a phase-in.</p> <p>The Commission went back to a discussion of marking the property boundaries, wetlands, etc.</p> <p>Cummin reviewed the statutory timeline: the Commission has 45 days to act on the application (by January 10, 2013).</p> <p>More discussion on notification of neighbors resulted in a promise that the neighbors in attendance would be notified in writing of the Commission's decision.</p> <p>Dana Cummings will check with VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) on the calculation of the density bonus.</p> |
| <p>Village-Based Code Public Hearing Discussion</p> | <p>After a discussion of dates for the a public hearing for Village-Based Code, the Commission settled on Thursday, January 10, at 7 pm, at the Huntington Public Library, pending confirmation of Paul Dreher.</p> |
| <p>Member Business</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Everett Marshall said he forwarded a notice on an engineers training session on December 15. 2. Marshall informed the Commission that the ECOS group will meet on December 3, at the Richmond Town Office, 7-9 pm. 3. Dana Cummings mentioned that the new draft of the letter to Boards and Committees from the HPC had a new draft. 4. Cummings reported that the water/wastewater committee has fulfilled its charge and its chair, Barbara Fellitti, has stepped down. In order for the concept to move forward new members are needed for the committee, especially someone to serve as chair. 5. Cummings reported that Barbara Elliott will request a part-time position that will handle administrative tasks around wastewater, the transition to the DRB (Development Review Board), and Village Code. The wastewater committee thought it was a good time to starting working with landowners for options. 6. When asked about the DRB, Cummings replied that the Selectboard had received nothing from the ZBA (Zoning Board of Adjustment). Gordon Miller said that the ZBA wrote a letter that said, in essence, it approved the concept, but now is not the time to go forward because no one from the ZBA would continue – the pool is small. Julia Austin added that the transition would be long since everything has to be “finished out.” Everett Marshall added the it may be a long timeline. 7. Marshall encouraged the HPC to end its meetings at 9:30. 8. Heidi Racht said that, at a future meeting, she wanted to discuss |

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| | <p>policies and procedures regarding notification and also who should go on the agenda and when she should tell them they needed to wait until the next time. She said that the Commission had indicated that it would accommodate property owners who wanted to bring in sketch plan options. It seems to her that the Public Comment time has become the de facto project review time and the 15 minutes on the agenda often goes on much longer. There was a discussion about the Warren proposed minor subdivision, which took time at three separate meetings, the last time taking about 45 minutes for Public Comment; Racht said she received an email that the project was now not moving forward. She asked for guidance in what to tell people when the agenda was “closed” and then stated that she wanted the Commission to support her.</p> |
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Adjournment: Everett Marshall moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ginger Lubkowitz. The Commission adjourned the meeting at 10:25 pm.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES TO THE HPC: December 3, 2012

MINUTES APPROVED: December 10, 2012

APPROVED MINUTES TO THE TOWN CLERK: December 11, 2012