



City of Barre, Vermont

"Granite Center of the World"

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Planning Commission Meeting Minutes June 28, 2018 at 6:30 P.M. Council Chambers, City Hall (6 N Main St)

A regular meeting of the Barre City Planning Commission was called to order by Commission Chair Jackie Calder at 6:30 pm at City Hall. In attendance were Commissioners Michael Hellein, Jim Hart, David Sichel and Ken Lunde. Also in attendance were Planning Director, Janet Shatney, Permit Administrator, Heather Grandfield, Times Argus reporter David Delcore, and City Manager Steve Mackenzie. Chair Calder determined that there was a quorum for the evening.

Adjustments to the Agenda: None.

Visitors and Communications: None.

Old Business: A motion was made by Commissioner Sichel and seconded by Commissioner Lunde to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on June 14, 2018, motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Lori LaCroix, owner of Sidewalk Village building at 136 N. Main Street participated with questions on the draft zoning ordinance. She gave her background about owning the building, and some of her tenants; and gave a brief description of the attempt to have an antique flea market in the basement, some other potential tenants. She doesn't want to have to turn away a prospective tenant because of the draft zoning. She cited the national rumor that "downtowns are dying" due to box store large parcel development and wants to be sure that we continue to have retail type stores in our downtown, and regulations aren't too restrictive.

Franchise signage was talked about, and Commissioner Hellein and Chair Calder discussed that downtowns are different. Our draft is based on a national code, and narrowed for Barre City in particular. Commissioner Hellein did a great job explaining that the wording is not meant to discourage any franchise, and they would most likely be able to adhere to our sign regulations. Murals were also briefly discussed.

In reviewing the overlay design standards, she felt they sounded very "Burlingtonish". Commissioner Hellein explained that if we had gone with Form Based Code, another type of zoning method; that many uses would end up being eliminated, and that is why our draft is as is. Chair Calder stated that it's written to be compatible with our downtown and our historic character.

Ms. LaCroix read that the draft is aimed at making the process easier, and gave a quick rundown of cost of permits needed for the last tenant. She also asked about both the State and City Fire Marshals appearing to be reviewing the identical items when they came for an inspection, which didn't make her happy about spending the monies on both city and state building permit applications. She was informed that these questions did not fall under the Commission's purview, but the Public Safety Director.

Finally, when asked about the process, Chair Calder let her know the Commission's next steps and how these will continue to be forwarded on.

New Business: Our meeting dates are slated for July 12 and 26. Commissioner Sichel will be traveling for work both dates; Consultant Ms. Saxton will be with us only on July 12.

A tentative Commission Hearing date has been set for Thursday, August 9, and will be firmed up at the July 12 meeting. This will give Director Shatney the required 15-day advanced notice that needs to occur (on or before July 26).

Continued advertising was talked about, frequency on Front Porch Forum, reach out to BADC, have a set-up display in City Hall during the Heritage Festival, and maybe place a PSA on the local radio station.

Executive Session: None.

Roundtable: Administrator Grandfield gave a rundown of permits, what is going in front of the DRB on July 11; Director Shatney informed the Commission she worked with CVRPC and has the energy element done for the revision to the Municipal Plan, and is working on the new required forestry element.

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn at 7:25 pm was made by Commissioner Hellein and seconded by Commissioner Hart, motion carried. There is no audio recording of this meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Shatney, Planning Director

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