



City of Barre, Vermont

“Granite Center of the World”

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Planning Commission Meeting Minutes August 23, 2018 at 6:30 P.M. Conference Room, 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 6:32 pm at City Hall. In attendance were Commissioners Michael Hellein, Jim Hart, and Ken Lunde, and David Sichel. Also in attendance were Planning Director Janet Shatney; Permit Administrator Heather Grandfield; consultant Brandy Saxton of PlaceSense; David Delcore of the Times Argus; and visitors Barre Area Development Corp. Director Joel Schwartz; City Manager Steve Mackenzie; Mayor Lucas Herring; Craig and Deborah Gable; Councilor Sue Higby; Councilor Michael Boutin; City Clerk Carol Dawes; business owners Michael Buzzi and Lori LaCroix; and 2 unknown people as well. Chair Calder determined that there was a quorum for the evening.

Adjustments to the Agenda: None.

Visitors and Communications for anything not on the agenda: None.

Old Business: A motion was made by Commissioner Sichel and seconded by Commissioner Hellein to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held on August 9, 2018, motion carried unanimously.

Because this was a meeting with an invitation to the City Councilors specifically to brief them on the steps that are taken when the Commission is close to holding their final hearing, Chair Calder gave a background of the two years of work that have been going on, the comments received and the changes made as the process has moved forward. She explained that it was critical that the Council understand that once the draft has been voted to move forward to the Council for first reading, that the zoning administration must review each and every application against both sets of rules (current and proposed). She also thanked her fellow Commissioners and the Consultant for the two plus years of work on this, as well as the zoning administrator and the planning director.

The table of comments was then addressed, that was highlighted to show those questions posed for this evening's work.

- Discussion included what was a permanent or moveable swimming pool;
- fair housing and the ability to have multifamily dwellings in the City; bed and breakfasts and Inns including Airbnb's;
- religious institutions and the federal rules around them;
- rehab services and residential treatment, including on-site treatment and the safety of that in a neighborhood, and the need for patients to be able to utilize city services such as the bus. It was decided that this use should be divided into two uses;
- Recessed doorways was discussed, as it wasn't quite understood what one was, and more clarifying language could be added;

- Adult entertainment was also discussed, and Ms. LaCroix asked if the 600 ft. distance rule was an arbitrary number and could it be changed; Ms. Saxton explained that anywhere from 500-1,000 feet is industry standard, and since our downtown is small, 600 feet felt like an adequate distance;
- Further discussion on principal entrances – it was made understood that a building could have more than one;
- Dwelling units on the first floor in the downtown was a topic, and in the draft in the UC-1 not allowed at all. Mr. Schwartz reminded us that brick and mortar stores are evolving, they are smaller, and perhaps a dwelling unit in the back of the business with the entrance to in the back, not on the front could be considered;
- Efficiency apartments and the 150 square foot minimum was talked about, as well as dwelling unit sizes overall, current and proposed, as it relates to some desiring people to not have the ability to “chop” up a single family home for more rental units;
- Multi-family units (new) would have to come in front of the DRB for site plan review at a minimum;
- Treatment facilities and their minimum distances to other types of uses in the City was discussed (3228.A) which the Consultant is going to work for more language;
- “Tiny” homes and the width and the needs of people for their “stuff” was a topic, further discussion of what would be essentially an RV or camper, and those on a permanent foundation;
- Technical review costs was questioned and asked to be removed. The idea behind using this tool was talked about, and that the current zoning has a form of the ability to request further information of an applicant already stated;
- Finally as discussed, the proposed design review district, those historic and potentially historic buildings in the city, those on the state and/or national register, those that could be nominated, and the desire to expand as drafted.

Further work on the draft will occur, with edits being brought to the next Commission meeting on September 13, 2018.

New Business: None.

Executive Session: None.

Roundtable: Mayor Herring stated that he will be communicating with those Councilors that were not present at this meeting as requested, and will encourage them to attend the September 13th meeting.

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn at 8:48 pm was made by Commissioner Hart and seconded by Commissioner Hellein, motion carried. There is no audio recording of this meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Shatney, Planning Director