

Town of Woodbury Planning Commission

July 20, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission Members Present: Thomas “Skip” Lindsay-Chair; Michael Gray, Dave Barnowski; Jim Schweithelm, PhD

The “virtual” meeting was called to order at 6:08 PM.

Members of the Public Present: Patrick Flood; Clare Rock, CFM-Senior Planner-Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

Adjustments to the Agenda: None

Public Comment:

Patrick Flood noted that he joined the meeting to get a sense of the process the Planning Commission is proposing for public outreach and subsequent input to the Municipal Plan.

Clare Rock commented that she is interested in witnessing the bid opening as the representative of the CVRPC.

Request for Proposal-Planning Consultant Services Bid Opening:

Skip noted that the Planning Commission received one (1) response to the RFP. Following stipulations in the RFP, Skip opened the bid response and reported that the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission was the lone respondent. The cost proposal from the CVRPC totaled \$11,352.00.

The CVRPC’s response and cost proposal will be evaluated based on experience and reputation, understanding of Vermont’s Municipal Plan requirements per 24 V.S.A Chapter 117, and price. The documents were scanned and emailed to the planning commissioners for their review along with an evaluation worksheet. Subsequently, the Planning Commission will hold a duly warned special meeting to discuss the CVRPC’s response and reach a decision to accept the proposal or not. Michael announced that he’ll be recusing himself from any deliberations as he is a member of the CVRPC’s Executive Board. The commissioners will make their final recommendation to the Select Board at the Board’s August 10, 2020 meeting.

The project’s “next steps” were discussed in great detail. Dave Barnowski introduced a motion that the Planning Commission apply for a FY2021 Municipal Planning Grant sponsored by the Department of Housing and Community Development. Jim seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Clare Rock noted that the funds available through the MPG may well be diminished to issues stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic and its effect on the economy. Jim offered his help to write the application which is due to the Department of Housing and Community Development on October 1, 2020. Grant awards will be announced in December 2020.

In response to a question from Jim regarding land use in the current 2003, Municipal Plan, Michael will scan and forward a 2016 Municipal Plan draft to the commissioners. Michael noted the 2016 Municipal Plan Draft was rejected by the CVRPC.

The Commissioners and members of the public agreed that creating the Municipal Plan will be a collaborative effort involving Woodbury citizens, Commissions, and Associations. No fewer than six (6) community outreach events are planned starting in September 2020 and culminating in March 2021.

Public outreach and how that may occur dominated the remainder of the discussion. Patrick Flood thought it prudent the commissioners send meeting invitations directly to key stake holders in Woodbury in an effort to elicit their engagement in the planning process. Michael noted a survey was sent to Woodbury residents during the 2016 planning process to encourage additional input in the plan's creation. The group discussed several methods of community outreach including announcements in diverse social media applications including:

- Front Porch Forum
- Survey Monkey
- Woodbury's Web Site
- Woodbury Face Book Page
- Print Media

The group discussed the Covid-19 pandemic and the effect it may have should an in-person public meeting be planned. Most agreed a hybrid meeting, in person and in concert with a virtual meeting, could be the solution. Michael noted the most recent Select Board meeting was held at the Woodbury Town Hall and "live broadcasted" by Hardwick Community TV. Comments/questions from members of the public were phoned-in.

Jim wondered if a delay in the planning initiative until the Covid-19 pandemic is appropriate? The commissioners agreed to consider a delay if needed or recommended by the State Health Department.

Woodbury Grand List-Form 411 Discussion:

In response to Jim's information request during the June 15, 2020, meeting Skip asked the Woodbury Listers if they have a report that differentiates between residential and seasonal homes. Merry Gangemi followed up and provided a NEMRC (New England Municipal Resource) CAMA (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) 411 report that details a summary of property types in Woodbury.

The report's headings included:

- Real Estate Categories and their respective listed values
 - 861 Number of listed real estate

- Exemptions
 - Veterans
 - Comcast Cable
 - Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department

- Non-Taxable Parcels
 - 16 Total
 - 13 Town of Woodbury Properties
 - 2-Churches
 - 1-Woodbury School District

The commissioners found it interesting that the report indicates the value of the land in “current use” is greater than the value of the property subject to municipal and education tax. The commissioners also noted that Comcast’s \$301,600 assessment is part of the tax-exempt list.

Merry Gangemi was unable to attend the meeting due to a health issue. The commissioners will invite the Listers to join a future meeting and discuss the 411 report in more detail.

Skip introduced a motion to adjourn at 7:29 PM; the motion carried unanimously.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting is August 17, 2020.