

Planning Commission

Town of Weston

PO Box 98, Weston, VT 05161-0098

Minutes of Meeting, January 11, 2024

Present: James (Lexi) Young, Geof Brown, Chris Morrow, Tom Ettinger, Morgan Hart, Lisa Swett, and Matt Bachler

Guest: Will Freeman, New Thought Vermont

Not Present:

1. Lexi Young declares a PC quorum and calls the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.
2. Additions / Changes to the Agenda:
 - a. Introduce officially Lisa Swett
 - b. Postpone #4 to February where all unapproved minutes will be approved and signed.
 - c. Geof explained that Sharon Crossman who is on the agenda has not responded to his reach out and may not be part of this meeting.
3. Reviewed re-write of **"Town Government, Community Facilities, Services and Recreation"** section of the town plan:
 - a. Geof noted that this was not sent to the Selectboard as noted in the December minutes as his comments on the document needed to be discussed at this meeting. This document will go to the Selectboard after the meeting and this may be the better way to do this going forward. All agreed to this approach.
 - b. Matt reviewed via PowerPoint where he made major changes.
 - i. Updating background information
 - ii. Moving 2 sections to other sections in plan
 - iii. Adding more information specific to flood
 - iv. Updating policy information
 - c. Reviewed the PC's questions and recommendations relative to Matt's proposed changes in the document. Matt agreed to several changes and will produce a revised document by the 1/19.
 - d. Will Freeman of New Thought Vermont joined the meeting and requested that additional consideration be given to adding language around access to and from buildings and access for those with disabilities in general in and about town. In addition, Will asked for New Thought – as a nonprofit public service – be added to the document in the section that lists out similar nonprofits.
4. The Town Plan section **"Natural, Historic and Scenic Resources"** was reviewed by Matt Bachler:
 - a. Matt reviewed this section by identifying requirements from the state that need to be more fully established in the section – key one highlighted was **"forest blocks"** and **"habitat connectors"**.
 - b. Matt pointed out that our conservation lot size at 5 acres is very small by comparison to other towns that are at 27 acres. Other Act 171 provisions should be considered in this document.
 - c. Tom mentioned that there are needs to communicate with the National Forrest Service relative to their plans for the National Forrest. For example, they have management plans that need to be communicated to the town.

- d. Lexi brought up the need to establish areas where we would want to possibly relocate a fire station and or a market / gas station to. This is under the land use section.
5. The Town Plan section "Education" was reviewed by Matt Bachler:
 - a. Need to update information relative to Act 46.
 - b. The Little School needs to have more information and should be discussed more in the background section. Geof pointed out that it also fulfills a need relative to daycare and early childhood development which are high priorities for the state.
 - c. Drafts of the above chapters will come to us by 1/29.
6. Guest Sharon Crossman did not appear as a guest.
7. Approving minutes moved to February meeting.
8. New and Old Business:
 - a. Chirs Merrow discussed that VCRD has a grant program specific to climate change. Chris will send out a link to this program and wants to get input from folks to see if the community is ready and where could we go with this. Please get back to Chris with your ideas and thoughts as this closes in a week! The link: <https://www.vtrural.org/climate-economy/climate-economy-resilient-communities/>
 - b. Our Town Clerk has provided PC emails for all the PC members. They will be circulated under separate cover. Should our communications be subpoenaed, this would keep any personal communications out of the public view.
9. Lexi motions to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 pm. Chris seconded the motion. *Motion passes unanimously.*

Approved:  James Young, Chair

Date 2-5-2024

Submitted:  Geof Brown, Secretary

Date 2-5-2024