



RUTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall – 52 Washington St. – Rutland, VT 05701
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4/27/2016

Minutes April 27, 2016

Present: Dave Coppock (DC), Alvin Figiel (AF), Patrick Griffin (PG) and Bob Barrett, City Building Inspector.

DC, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:43 pm.

- I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS – None.**
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 13, 2016.**

PG moved to approve the minutes of April 13, 2016. AF seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- IV. NEW BUSINESS – None.**
- V. OLD BUSINESS – Sign Ordinance.**

Copies of the revised grid prepared by PG were distributed.

AF discussed how he created proposed sign guidelines for the Downtown Business District. Combining the historic downtown map and the Downtown Business District boundary map, he determined there were three distinct areas. Referring to the map he said the black buildings were built to the lot lines; the green buildings were residential and the blue was the shopping plaza. Using the grid style prepared by PG, AF charted the signage for each of the zones.

DB-A, built to lot line - no free-standing sign and building signage confined to the spandrel (area between the windows and floors of the building), shop cornice and major cornice. The max height would be determined by the permissible area and ARC review.

PG asked about the awning signage. AF said it would be a permissible location.

DB-B, shopping plaza – review of signage. PG asked why internally illuminated lighting would be allowed in the plaza and nowhere else in the City. AF said he did not have a logical defense other than the canopy is a dark green and from where would the sign be otherwise illuminated. DC added that the hope of the revised signage was to bring back the personality but this plaza is a separate beast, its own entity and should be allowed as an exception. Bob said the current plaza

signage would be grandfathered and any new signage would look out of place. AF said the signage proposal responds to the reality that exists.

PG suggested making the proposal more generic by using less than 10 feet of building frontage for DB-A and greater than 10 feet of building frontage for DB-B.

DB-C, residential properties - The existing residential properties fall into the Gouger Hill/Court House/Main Street district signage. PG asked whether the Residential signage was more applicable. AF did not think a 4 sf sign was adequate.

Discussion continued regarding Strongs Avenue and how that area could benefit from having separate signage or whether it could be incorporated into the Downtown signage. There are buildings on Strongs Avenue that have businesses with less than 10 ft. of frontage that could be DB-A; there are businesses with more than 10 ft. of frontage that could be DB-B; and there are residences like DB-C. It was difficult to determine where the districts would start and end with Strongs Avenue continuing into the Downtown to Merchants Row. Concerns over how to address Howe Center, recognizing the current reality and not wanting to encourage property owners to do the wrong thing were discussed. The consensus was that Strongs Avenue would benefit more from design guidelines than from sign ordinance.

Discussion regarding signage in areas like Center Street Alley included how to address the development of business and signage after the Alley restoration is completed. It was decided that the signage would be based on the building frontage and approval of ARC.

DC suggested that for the Commission's homework he would work on the definitions using the Manchester sign ordinance and ILMA standards; PG volunteered to add the proposed Downtown signage to the grid; DC would contact SS and LW to work on the text. PG suggested contacting Manchester to ask if they have their sign ordinance in Word for editing and tracking changes.

DC informed the Commission that Alderman Melinda Humphrey would be the Board's liaison. AF said the Mayor would be assigning him to the DRB but he would attend PC meetings as a liaison to the DRB. AF also mentioned a DRB hearing for a development in GB-WA that had not gone before ARC.

VII. ADJOURN.

PG moved to adjourn. AF seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 6:42 pm. The next meeting will be held May 25th.

For the Commission