RUTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall – 52 Washington St. – Rutland, VT 05701
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6/17//2015

Minutes
June 17, 2015

Present: Dave Coppock (DC), Susan Schreibman (SS), Larry Walter (LW), Patrick Griffin (PG) and Alvin Figiel (AF).

DC, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 6 pm.

I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS – None.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 20, 2015.

AF moved to approve the minutes of May 20, 2015. SS seconded. Motion carried 4-0 with PG abstaining.

IV. NEW BUSINESS – None.

V. OLD BUSINESS.

Proposed Design Control District criteria – AF discussed the work he has completed on the Design Control Districts criteria. Alvin said he characterized and described each district and discussed what was worth saving and what needed changing. He said controlling signage in the districts was paramount by allowing 12 sq. ft. signs that are never internally illuminated. He added that no parking in the front of a building should be permitted and instead a green strip should be in front with parking to the side and rear of a building.

SS asked if he considered specific setbacks. Alvin said no but he thought the green strip should be substantial. SS suggested a uniform setback for the districts.

Alvin discussed the difficulty of design control for gas stations. He said the problem stems from multiple curb cuts, lots of asphalt and no landscaping.

On Woodstock Avenue the buildings are small New England style but the signage is out of control. The City sign ordinance allows the size of a sign to be based on the liner frontage. South Main Street's commercial strip would benefit from a green strip with deciduous trees.

SS asked if Alvin considered the permitted uses in the districts. He had not and instead concentrated on design guidelines.

Alvin added that the Gateway Business 4/7 description is a 1 block radius with six lanes that needs to be made more compatible with other Gateway Districts. He suggested requiring two story minimum building heights and fewer curb cuts.

DC asked if Alvin considered a minimum roof pitch. Alvin said yes 1-6 or greater. PG said adding screening of 4ft. high deciduous trees or shrubs would also help.

It was requested that PG resend the design criteria to the Commission.

Alvin requested the Commission read the document and make notes. He would like to submit a proposal endorsed by the Commission to the City. Discussion was tabled for August 19.

Proposed Changes to Zoning By-laws Article II – The Commission discussed the review process of the Architectural Review Committee. DC will write a letter to the Mayor discussing the current zoning does require the Architectural Review Committee to review all Gateway Business Districts and make a report to the DRB.

The membership of the Architectural Review Committee was also discussed. The Committee should consist of an architect and Historic Preservation member.

AF said the zoning rewrite needs to be undertaken by a specialist. DC reminded the Commission that the Mayor wants to wait for the new Zoning Administrator before undertaking the zoning rewrite.

AF suggested inviting the Mayor and Board of Alderman President to the next Planning Commission meeting to discuss the need to hire a consultant to rewrite the zoning, the fact that the zoning is not in compliance with state statute and the timing of the Municipal Planning Grant to pay for the cost of the consultant.

SS said the RRPC could be hired as the consultant and stay within the $8,000 grant award that would not require a City match.

Complete Streets Discussion – DC said the Public Works Committee meeting held May 27 was productive. The DPW agreed to develop a template for Complete Streets in Rutland based on the Burlington modal.

SS said the plan is a good idea but looking at paving projects 1-2 years out, case by case, would be more helpful. She hopes the DPW will create the plan through a public engagement process.

PG suggested that the Planning Commission and DPW Committee be involved in reviewing the plan.

The discussion turned to the Dorr Drive project with the Commission asking for information regarding when the project will be bid out and what the bid for the bike lane includes. DC said he would contact either Jim or Jeff at DPW. Discussion was tabled until the next meeting July 15.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE – NONE.

VIII. ADJOURN.

AF moved to adjourn. PG seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:51 pm.

For the Commission
Barbara Spaulding, Recording Secretary