



RUTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall – 52 Washington St. – Rutland, VT 05701
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 969 – Rutland, VT 05702
Phone: 802-773-1800

Minutes May 9, 2018

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

Also Present: Tara Kelly, Zoning Administrator; and Barbara Spaulding, recording secretary.

SS, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

- I. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS** – None.
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – **February 28, 2018 and April 11, 2018.**

LW moved to approve the minutes of February 28, 2018 and April 11, 2018. DC seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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

There was discussion regarding the presentation on April 11. Tara was commended for a great job and keeping the meeting on task. Tara discussed follow up she had received including a request from Steve Peters, DRP Executive Director for a timeline regarding adoption so he can make his constituents aware of the changes.

Tara said key points were made during the presentation that need to be addressed including:

- What triggers a new sign?
- Window sign coverage percentage?
- Lighting.
- Grandfathering vs. Amortization
- Electronic message boards.
- Junction of 4/7 as restrictive as other districts.

A legal review of the ordinance will be necessary to determine if it is legal to regulate what is posted on message boards and whether “civic organization” includes non-profits vs. governmental agencies.

Grandfathering the existing signs is preferred over the expense of amortization. The Commission reviewed what would be the triggers for signs needing to be in compliance with the new ordinance. Tara volunteered to look at other ordinances and rewrite the sections in the draft sign ordinance regarding Pre-Existing Signs, Notice of Change of Sign Owner or User, Abandonment and No Permit Required. The consensus was that these sections need to be stronger and better defined.

Alderman Mattis discussed how changes to free standing and monument signs should be more restrictive and window signs, particularly in the downtown, at the pedestrian level should be less restrictive. LW added that professional park signage should just be an address as opposed to retail signage which lists businesses. AF said the signage should be more liberal in the Downtown.

PG asked about the current process when a new sign is created. Tara said her office is typically contacted by the sign company.

Tara said the next steps include a legal review which can be paid for out the Planning Commission budget, followed by a review by the Economic and Community Development Committee.

Zoning Bylaws Update.

Tara said the draft is 85% complete. The 100 page draft, with 40 pages of definitions, includes all of the Chapter 117 amendments made in 2007. She distributed 3 handouts to help provide a framework and guide for the Commissioners as they read through the draft next month. Tara reviewed the highlights of each of the following handouts:

- Land Use Development Regulations – The State of Vermont regulates the municipalities zoning as dictated by 24 VSA Chapter 117 as amended in 2007. The City should have been compliant in 2011. This handout includes the process for adoption.
- Zoning Regulations – This details what is expected to be included in the bylaws and includes allowed uses, permitted or conditional. This also includes the criteria for a site plan vs. conditional use review and what goes before the DRB. There is also information regarding variances and waivers.
- Zoning – Required Provisions and Limitations – This handout describes what can and can not be in zoning as governed by The Fair Housing Act.

Susan suggested that although the Commission will receive the full draft to review, they should concentrate on one section at a time. Tara said it will be necessary to have the full draft in order to understand each section.

Tara said it may be necessary to apply for an additional municipal planning grant to complete the process.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE – None.

VII. ADJOURN.

The meeting ended at 6:56 pm. The next meeting will be held June 13, 2018.

For the Commission:

Barbara Spaulding, Recording Secretary