

**Johnson Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes, Thursday November 13, 2014**

Present PC members: David Bergh, David Grozinsky, David Butler, Paul Warden, Ben Waterman.

Guests: Luke Pedduzi, Charles Gallanter, David Godette, Lea Kilvadyova

Note: All votes are unanimous unless otherwise noted

David Butler called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

Review of October 14, 2014 minutes

David Bergh moved and David Grozinsky seconded the motion to approve the October 14th minutes. All voted in favor.

Form Based Code: Discussion of Form Based Zoning Steering Committee Progress

David Bergh relayed Cindy Hennard's message that the conversation at the last meeting of the Steering Committee was productive and positive. Lea added that the meeting was well attended and the attendees were engaged. David Butler asked whether we have a mechanism in place for Paul Dreher to report to the Planning Commission on a regular basis. Lea said that, per agreement between Paul and Town, Paul is required to submit monthly reports to the Commission. He has not done this for the last month. Paul's payment is contingent upon submitting the reports. David Butler reiterated that he would feel better if he had a report stating what has been accomplished and decided by the Committee. He didn't think that Paul's presence at the meetings was necessary and a written report would suffice. Lea said she will communicate this request to Paul.

Lea mentioned that, as part of the process, Paul would like to organize a community-wide meeting about the project. Ben and David Butler said that they would like to have more details about this meeting. Lea said she would like to know about the date of the meeting at least a month prior to the meeting so she can assist with public outreach. At Town Meeting, a presentation should be made about the work of the Committee and the project status.

The Commission discussed the Committee membership. Lea reported that the Committee has 12 members and read the members' names. She said that Karen Geiger has not been attending meetings. She also said that a wife and a husband couple Kyle Nuse and Michael Mahnke cannot both come to the meetings and only one will attend. Lea recommended removing the non-participating members from the Committee and replacing them with other interested ones. She said that Charles Flaum expressed an interest in serving on the Committee. Lea asked Charles Gallanter if he would like to join the Committee since he participates in all meetings anyway. He said no. Ben Waterman asked what was unique about being on the Committee as opposed to just participating as a non-committee member. David Butler said that Committee members can vote. **David Bergh moved and David Grozinsky seconded the motion to remove Karen Geiger from the Committee and replace Karen with Charles Flaum. All voted in favor.** Lea will send an email to Karen Geiger to inform her about the Commission's vote.

Charles Gallanter pointed out that the cancellation of the Nov 12th Form Based Committee meeting was not posted on the town web site and the meeting date was still advertised as being "on" at the web page calendar. He also mentioned that the cancellation of the November 11th meeting of the Planning Commission was not posted. Lea said she forgot to post the cancellations. David Butler asked whether this meeting was warned and if not whether we should close the meeting. Lea said that this meeting was warned.

Discussion of Maplefield's Status

Lea said that a few days ago Bob Selby emailed to Skip Vallee and asked for a project update. David Bergh thought that Bob did this as a follow to a past conversation in which the Commission stated their interest to periodically contact Skip about the updates. Lea said she believed that Skip has not yet responded to Bob's email.

Review of Recent Mail, including the Subway proposal

Lea said that on Nov 6, 2014, an application for Act 250 permit was submitted by Roy Marble on behalf of Premium Properties from Morrisville to renovate the former Piezano's building to a Subway restaurant. The Planning Commission has a party status in the proceedings. David Butler pointed that, in the absence of a local land use regulation, we cannot request changes to the developers' plans. We can express concerns. He asked whether there are concerns that the Commission might like to express. David Bergh pointed out that the brownfields issue has been taken care of. David Butler said that his big concern is parking, and ingress and egress to and from the lot. There was a discussion about a possible historic value of the structure. A concern was expressed about the Subway's neon lighting.

Two other mail pieces for the Commission included the Act 250 approval for a tea house on Plot Road and a Wastewater and Potable Water Supply Permit for eight additional mobile home units for the Highlands Heights park on Wescom Road.

Town and Village Plan Revision

David Bergh reviewed economic development chapters of the Town and the Village Plan. He noted that the sections contain a lot of statistical data that will need to be updated. The list of economic development initiatives is partly accurate and partly outdated, and will need to be refreshed. David Grozinsky said that the Wi-Fi initiative should be included. David Bergh said that the plan narrative highlights that people working in Johnson have the highest wages in Lamoille County. Johnson residents, on the other hand, have the lowest incomes in the County. This suggests that many Johnson residents have out of town, low paying jobs. David would like to see that we add an implementation task to the chapter that speaks to a pursuit of public transportation.

Ben Waterman asked about the status of the Jewett property. Lea responded that the town has a five year option on the property. Our current dilemma is that the asking price exceeds the appraised value of the property. Duncan has reached out to the Jewett about the possibility of adjusting the asking price. Lea said that until the two values are at par, it is hard to move forward with fundraising for the purchase and development. Funders who could provide grants to buy and develop the property may not assist us unless the appraised value matches the asking price. Lea said that we currently do not have a business interested in locating at the site. She said that some communities invest into developing industrial property with the goal to be ready when an interested business comes along. Our community will need to decide whether we want to postpone our involvement until there is an interested business or whether we go ahead and prepare the ground for potentially interested businesses. As an example of a potentially interested business, Lea mentioned that recently Duncan has been approached by the executive director of Lamoille Economic Development Corporation who was scouting available properties for a manufacturer of composite utility poles. The business would create 200 jobs. They need a 20 acre parcel. Right now, we do not have a property available that we could offer to this business. Bringing the discussion back to the town plan, David Bergh suggested that our current plan contains a fairly vague language in support of the industrial park initiative and recommended that this language be revisited.

LCPC meeting

David Bergh reminded that on November 25th the LCPC will host a meeting to hear municipalities' input to the proposed regional plan. Lea said that she reviewed the proposed plan and would like to attend the meeting. She said that the purpose of the meeting is to identify action items from the proposed plan that are top priorities for our municipality. Lea said that her priorities were the siting of a wood pellet manufacturing business in the county, making state lands accessible for maple sugaring, and the repair of the existing housing stock with the emphasis on developing owner occupied housing vs. rental housing. David Grozinsky said that to him, the last item seemed the most pertinent and pressing. He was supportive of the sugaring idea and not so sure about the pellet manufacturing. David Butler said that creating pellets utilizes more energy than we gain by burning the pellets and for that reason he does not like the industry. However, the trickledown economics of a wood pellet plant is huge. Because of the positive impact on the local economy, David would like the Commission to support this action item. He also said that housing is almost equally as important for economic development. Sugaring on State lands is a small trickledown as it is very limited in terms of the number of people it effects. Lea said that an additional action item she would like the LCPC act on is the tightening up of the connection between available jobs and housing. It is important that people have an opportunity to live close to work, especially if the work is not paying high wages. Spending a substantial portion of low income on transportation

does not help. Perhaps the availability of public transportation could help. **David Grozinsky moved and David Bergh seconded the motion for Lea to attend the LCPC meeting and present the priority action items. All voted in favor.**

Article 14 at Town Meeting

Charles Gallanter brought up that the warning at the town meeting, article 14, asked that the planning commission determine if Johnson desires form based code. He would like to know whether the Planning Commission has done it. Planning Commissioners explained that they are in the process of fulfilling the charge. They set up a Steering Committee to develop a product that can be shown to voters. The intent is to provide information to the voters about form based code and how it may impact Johnson. The voters will then determine whether they would like to see the code implemented or not.

Next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 9th at 7 p.m.

David Bergh move and David Grozinsky seconded the motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. All voted in favor.

Minutes taken by Lea Kilvadyova