Johnson Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, Nov 12, 2013
APPROVED

Present:
Planning Commission members: Bob Selby (chair), David Butler (vice-chair), David Grozinsky, Ben Waterman, David Bergh, Cindy Hennard, Kim Dunkley
Others: Taylar Foster (Regional Planner at Lamoille County Planning Commission); Lea Kilvadyova (Community & Economic Development Coordinator).

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Call to Order
Bob called the meeting to order at 7:06.

Review and Approve Minutes of October 8
David Butler moved and David Grozinsky seconded the motion to accept the minutes of October 8. Bob, Ben, David Butler, David Bergh, David G. and Cindy voted in favor. Kim abstained.The motion passed.

Treasurer's report
Lea did not have an update on the current budget status.

Town Plan Discussion
Taylar Foster provided an overview of State Statute requirements for a municipal plan. There are 12 elements and 17 planning goals (4 general goals and 13 specific goals) that the municipality has to address in a municipal plan. In order for the plan to have a weight with the State, the plan has to be confirmed by a regional planning commission. Enhanced consultations are provided by regional planning commissions to assist municipalities with addressing the specific planning goals. These consultations are required by the State.

Taylar distributed a Town Plan assessment sheet. The sheet lists the plan's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. (Note: The sheet is attached to the minutes).

David Butler said that some comments on the sheet seem to delve into the realm of private business. For example, how can a town effectively address childcare or renewable energy issues? Bob Selby asked what other municipalities do along this line. Taylar said that if there is a guideline in the plan, it can demonstrate where the municipality's preference stands.

Bob Selby said that he believed that it was not appropriate for the town plan to debate over a hypothetical situation. For instance, what if the town plan opposes wind energy projects and then a specific project comes along that might be acceptable to the community? A debate over

a specific project would be more productive. Cyndi asked how other towns express their desire to protect environmental resources and still have a voice for a specific project. Taylar suggested that we perhaps could identify areas of towns where we would like to see a project, or say that we wish to address projects on a case by case approach. David Butler suggested blanket approach language. "We support renewable energy but we reserve the right to review a project's impact on the view shed, etc." Taylar said that our position will be stronger if the plan says that the Town wishes to address projects that are subject to Act 248 and Act 250 reviews. She also said that if the plan emphasizes an importance of a certain area, then, if there is a project that seeks to address that area, it can lean on the plan for support.

David Grozinsky said that it is possible to anticipate projects that may come along. How do we prepare ourselves for these projects and address their impact on the community? Taylar said that Eden conducted a survey to get input on the Town Plan. The LCPC can share the survey with us.

Lea said that it is challenging for a small community to address some of the goals of the State Statute. Taylar responded that the all statutory goals need to be addressed. If we do not feel we have viable solutions for the goals, we should state so and say why. Kim suggested that some issues can be addressed more effectively on the regional level. She suggested a regional meeting at which communities would talk about regional issues together. David Bergh mentioned that the Johnson Village rep position at the LCPC Board has been empty for years. He also mentioned that the LCPC is beginning to discuss housing as a regional issue.

Taylar talked about a plan element that has recently been added to the State Statute that needs to be included in the municipal plans. It is a flood resiliency element. There are two ways to meet the statutory requirement. We will either have a flood resiliency section in the plan or reference a hazard mitigation plan. The LCPC will provide assistance with the mitigation planning effort. The kick off meeting is planned for Dec 10. Taylar said that changes have also been made regarding village center designation applications and renewals. This will be applicable to Johnson, since we have a designated village center.

There was some discussion about merging the town and the village plans. Taylar said that Hyde Park merged their plans recently. Cyndi asked what the process is for merging the town and the village plan. It was clarified that the plan merger is different from a merger of municipalities. The plans can be merged without the municipal merger. **Kim moved and David Grozinsky seconded the motion to recommend a merger of the Town and the Village Plan. The motion passed.**

After the Town Plan discussion, Taylar reviewed LCPC's services and asked what assistance we would like from the LCPC.

Maplefields Project
David Grozinsky mentioned that he ran into Paul Dreher in Newport. Skip Vallee visited with the Newport's Development Review Board and made an effort to punch holes into the form based code. The Development Review Board folded.

Kim asked whether the bullet points listed in the October 8th minutes that speak to the community's vision for Maplefields were delivered to Skip. Bob said the points have not been relayed. **David Bergh moved and Cyndi seconded the motion to formally convey the bullet points from the Oct 8 minutes to Skip, in a letter - printed and signed.** All voted in favor. Duncan and Lea will be copied on the letter.

The next meeting will be on Dec 10th.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06.

Minutes taken by: Lea Kilvadyova