

## JOHNSON PLANNING COMMISSION

### 13 OCT 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Members (P=Present; A=Absent)

Charles Gallanter (P), David Butler (P), Greg Tatro (A), Kim Cotnoir (A), Kyle Hill (P), Rob Rodriguez (P), Shayne Spence (P), Paul Warden (P)

Start: 7:02 PM

Topics:

1. Agenda Changes - Shayne added ARPA Fund Use in St. Albans
2. Public Comment - None
3. Housekeeping

Approval of 08 SEP 2021 minutes – Shayne moved acceptance as written, Kylie seconded, Passed unanimously.

TOJ Email accounts – Kylie’s TOJ email only works as [khill@townofjohnson.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:khill@townofjohnson.onmicrosoft.com) – unclear why the “onmicrosoft” part is required. Other TOJ emails that bounced back when using the standard address: [gtatro@townofjohnson.com](mailto:gtatro@townofjohnson.com), [khill@townofjohnson.com](mailto:khill@townofjohnson.com), [sspence@townofjohnson.com](mailto:sspence@townofjohnson.com), [kcotnoir@townofjohnson.com](mailto:kcotnoir@townofjohnson.com). Brian is aware and working on this.

4. Johnson Recreation – VOREC grant proposal update.  
As of the date and time of the JPC meeting, no response regarding the preliminary grant proposal. Subsequently, Casey received word that Johnson’s preliminary proposal was not selected for a more detailed proposal. No information as to why yet.
5. JPC to update to Selectboard during their Monday, 18 Oct Meeting  
Paul to present, all welcome. Topics to be included:  
JPC website updated - members and terms, brief introduction with philosophy and mission  
JPC by-laws – written adopted, posted  
Class IV Roads – policy and recommendations  
Water & Sewer Line extension policy recommendation
6. Lamoille FiberNet update from Paul.  
A lot of work behind the scenes, new Executive Director (Val Davis) hired, Christine Hallquist now Direct of the Vermont Community Broadband Board, which will be distributing the federal broadband dollars on behalf of the state. VCUDA (Vermont Communications Union District Association) is working on bulk purchasing arrangements to benefit all CUDs and alleviate

expected cost and materials shortage issues. Lamoille FiberNet issues an RFP for ISPs and the Partnership Task Force has whittled the list of contenders down and conducted extensive interviews and reference checks – very promising. Currently, expectation is to be able to begin construction in 2022; location and build out pattern still to be determined (dependent at least in part on the selected partner).

7. ARPA Fund Use in St. Albans – Shayne forwarded an article in the St. Albans Messenger about use of ARPA funds to improve housing stock, wondering if there might be something similar that could be done in Johnson (see: *St. Albans to use ARPA funds for housing improvements on city's west side, 12 Oct 2021*). St. A's pilot program will use \$12,500 to update an owner-occupied property that frequently violates the city's public health and safety ordinance. Discussion regarding what criteria might be used, would it apply to owner-occupied properties only or rental units, what are the highest priorities for town ARPA funds and is this one of them, etc. This led to a general discussion of housing Stock in Johnson. Shayne brought up that the Racial Justice Committee had discussed housing stock in Johnson and may approach the Planning Commission in the future regarding a proposal they may make to the SelectBoard. Details unknown at this time, just an FYI. General discussion only, no action taken.

8. Other

Act 61 Cannabis Control Board – any updates? Shayne relayed that there is some effort to draft a bill that would allow cannabis-specific zoning even if a town lacks overall zoning (which the current law does not allow). Fate and timing uncertain. General discussion of whether Johnson should try to control the location of a licensed facility – e.g., if we are going to allow a licensed facility in Town, as long as it is not right next to a school, does it matter exactly where it is located? Mixed thoughts, no action taken.

Traffic light in Johnson – contact LCPC re traffic study? General discussion re traffic and agreement that there is some concern about volume and speed, but no certainty that a traffic light would be an improvement. No action taken.

Adjourn 8:20. Shayne moved, Rob seconded, passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: Wed, 10 Nov 2021, 7PM

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**From:** Shayne Spence <shaynewspence@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 4, 2021 9:08 PM  
**To:** Paul Warden <PWarden@analyticalservices.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Resolution in Support of Housing Lending Program

Hi Paul,

I took the initiative to draft language to use in a resolution supporting the idea of a housing revolving loan fund, as was discussed at our last meeting. I'd appreciate it if this language could be shared with the committee, and if anyone has any comments or suggestions, they can feel free to reach out to me via email or phone (802-585-8591). I want to emphasize that this is a starting point and I'm more than willing to see this language change and evolve, as long as the end result is something that gets the same message across.

Thanks!

**(DRAFT)**

### **RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF JOHNSON, RECOMMENDING TO THE JOHNSON SELECTBOARD THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HOUSING REVOLVING LOAN FUND**

WHEREAS the Lamoille County Planning Commission and Lamoille Housing Partnership have identified a significant need for additional housing in Johnson, and

WHEREAS this need for housing encompasses all types of housing, from affordable, low-income and subsidized units, to seasonal and short-term rentals, to single-family homes, and

WHEREAS the Town of Johnson recently received a sum of money from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), giving us an opportunity to act to address this crisis;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Johnson Planning Commission asks that the Johnson Selectboard consider their suggestion to establish a housing revolving loan fund, and

RESOLVED that the goals of the revolving loan fund would be as follows;

- To assist homeowners with repairs, weatherization, updates for fire and health codes
- To assist in the construction of new residential units
- To assist first-time homebuyers purchasing a home in Johnson, and
- To ensure that Johnson residents are able to access quality housing equitably and affordably

RESOLVED that the Johnson Planning Commission requests time at an upcoming Selectboard meeting to discuss this proposal, and other initiatives the town might undertake to address our housing shortage.