

**TOWN OF CHESTER
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**October 24, 2016
Minutes**

Board Members Present: Tom Bock, Naomi Johnson, Tom Hildreth, Randy Wiggin, and Claudio Veliz.

Staff Present: Cathy Hasbrouck, Recording Secretary

Visitors Present: Philip Perlah, Kelly Arrison, Amy Mosher, Marilyn Mahusky

Agenda Item 1, minutes of the October 10, 2016 meeting

The meeting opened with a review of the October 10, 2016 meeting minutes. Randy Wiggin moved to accept the minutes, Claudio Veliz seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion to accept the minutes as presented passed.

Agenda Item 2 Review Chapter 3 of Town Plan

Tom Bock reported that the Public Service Board is working on rules for Section 248 of Act 250, siting of energy projects. The PSB will present the proposed rules to the Regional Planning Commissions and then town Planning Commissions and Select Boards. The rules will not be final until sometime after January, 2017. He thinks that the new rules will require towns to pick potential sites for wind and solar installations and rate the sites.

Claudio Veliz asked the Commission about a potential conflict of interest if his firm gets involved in designing the Public Safety Building. The Planning Commission does have a conflict of interest policy which Claudio may consult. It was also noted that he could consult Jim Carroll, the town attorney. He decided to abstain from participating in the discussion of the Emergency Services department.

Naomi began the discussion of the Town Plan by explaining that the draft version sent out in the packet is dated March 26, 2016. That was the last date the document was updated. The document had a mixture of old information and some information from department heads as of 3/26/16.

The Commission members began the review by reading sections of the draft plan aloud and stopping for comments.

Under Town Administration, Table 3.1, a list of town owned lands and buildings was reviewed. It was noted that the new water tank lot on 103 south and the FEMA settlement lands had not been added. The date of the Annual Report which is shown as the source of the list should be added.

In the Emergency Services section the following changes and corrections were suggested:

- Clarification of the Ambulance Coordinator's job. Is it full- or part-time? Is it part of the weekday employee's job or part of another town employee's job?
- Is the replacement date of the current ambulance 2022 or should it be 2024? The plan says the ambulance was acquired in 2012 and it has a life expectancy of 12 years.
- The header marking the beginning of the Fire Department section should be moved up a paragraph.

- Should the compensation of Fire Department personnel include the depth of detail it currently has? Is that level of detail required by law? If the compensation package changed would the Town Plan need to be updated?
- Clarification of the issues that “new construction and modern homes” present to the Fire Department is needed. Will the proposed ladder truck fit in the proposed Public Safety Building? Will it fit in the existing buildings?
- Dates of the safety review and approval of the fire gear washer and dryer need to be included. Were the gear washer and dryer purchased? Has the exhaust system been installed?
- The location of the State Police Dispatch facility has changed and this information needs to be updated in the document.
- More current information on the status of the proposed public safety building is needed.
- A discussion of how opiates are currently affecting the town and the police department might be appropriate

In the Water and Wastewater sections the following changes and corrections were suggested:

- Information about the Solar Farm should be moved to Chapter 6, Energy
- The sentence on usage statistics for the Waste Water system on page 6 needs to have per day removed.
- Storm water is an important issue and should perhaps receive more attention in the document.

In the Solid Waste District Section the following changes and corrections were suggested:

- The Solid Waste contract information should be updated
- The impact of the new Vermont recycling laws should be included. Will the town need a composting facility?

In the Recreation Section the following changes and corrections were suggested:

- The section should be reviewed by the Recreation Director and brought up to date
- The Pinnacle now has disc golf and a basketball court
- The ice skating rink at Cobleigh Field will be moving to the Pinnacle this winter.
- Utilization rates of the different facilities would be helpful
- Work has been done on the town swimming pool this year. Has other work mentioned in the plan been completed?
- Bike paths and bike lanes should be discussed in the Town Plan. Should they be included in this section or in Chapter 2 Transportation?
- A discussion of the land behind Green Mountain Union High School, and whether it is open to the general public should be included.
- A clarification of the Rod and Gun Club’s policy of allowing non-members to use their range should be done

In the Electric Utilities Section the following changes and corrections were suggested:

- The name of the company providing electricity should be changed to Green Mountain Power
- It should be noted that electric transmission service has been upgraded recently
- Burying utility lines in the village center around Main Street was discussed. It was felt that this should be recommended. One possible method would be to do it the next time the street is repaved.

In the Telephone and Computer Section the following changes and corrections were suggested:

- VTel is not the only company that has wires on the poles for telephone service. Tom Hildreth will look into this and find out who the other providers are.
- Work was done by Green Mountain Power to reduce the number of power poles around the green, but VTel also needs to do some work in order to complete the job. Tom Hildreth volunteered to find out the status of the job.
- Fiber optic cable has recently been installed in Chester and needs to be mentioned in the plan.

In the Communications Towers and Structures Section the following changes and corrections were suggested:

- Tom Bock noted that the town had entered into an agreement with Velco to build a bigger and better tower for town emergency communication and the other current cellular phone tenants. The Commission should seek information about this from Julie Hance and Dave Pisha.
- Is there any type of ridgeline policy with regard towers in place at any level town, regional planning or state?
- The issue of how much say the town has in the placement of a tower is still unclear. The Public Service Board is writing new rules that address this topic. The FAA also has regulations that can override a town's choice.

There was additional discussion about where the policies and recommendations would be placed in the Town Plan. In the Chapter 3 draft, some sections had the policies and recommendations moved to another chapter of the plan document. The commission was divided on whether this was helpful or not. This issue was left open for further discussion.

There was also discussion about whether the Bylaws should be changed before the new Town Plan is complete. By statute, the Bylaws are intended to reflect the policies and recommendations in the Town Plan. In practice, both documents need updates on an on-going basis.

Agenda Item 3, Citizen Comments

Citizens had participated in the discussion of Chapter 3. There were no additional citizen comments.

Agenda Item 4, Set the date for the next meeting

The next meeting will be November 7, 2016 at 7:00 PM.

Naomi Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Claudio Veliz seconded the motion. The motion passed.