Minutes

Meeting of the Middlesex Planning Commission
Wednesday, November 20, 2024
6:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, VT 05602

This meeting was conducted in-person at the Town Clerk's Office and remotely using the town's Zoom account.

Planning Commission Members:
Sandy Levine
Mitch Osiecki
Paula Otenti
Betsy Davis

Guest:
Russ Bennett – Planetary Matters & Galaxy of Yes

Call to Order
Chair Sandy Levine called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Roll Call
Planning Commission members Sandy Levine, Mitch Osiecki, Betsy Davis, and Paula Otenti were present. Sandy noted that the Select Board has accepted the resignation of Elle O'Casey.

Russ Bennett was also present.

All attendees were present at the Town Office.

Mitch volunteered to take minutes.

Adjustments to Agenda
None

Minutes
Approval of October minutes tabled. Mitch took October minutes but shared the wrong ones ahead of this meeting. Will approve Oct and Nov minutes at next meeting.

Old Business:

Middlesex Village Traffic-calming Demonstration Project (update)
Our planned traffic-calming demonstration project has been postponed until 2025.

Sandy commented that we might want to think of the Walkable Village as a phased construction project. The whole thing is a daunting project. It will be easier to implement if we can break the project into smaller pieces.

Traffic-calming is an ongoing need. Paula suggested we explore acquisition of a portable traffic monitor. She noted that some have "data loggers," which can provide valuable information about traffic/speed patterns.

The CVRPC is apparently considering acquiring some units that could be shared by member towns.

Municipal Water System in the Middlesex Village (update)
Sandy noted that this project has been discussed for a while, but catastrophic floods the past two summers have hampered efforts to move this project forward. The first step is to distribute a survey to village area residents to gauge their support for the project. The SB has given the PC the OK to distribute a survey. Mitch has compiled a mailing list.

Russ commented that assays indicate that the Galaxy of Yes property has an ample water supply. He further reports that the supply meets all water quality standards, except radon (a common and relatively easy issue to mitigate).

Sample indicate no PFAS contamination.

Russ also noted that State/Federal funding typically covers 80% of the cost of a water system.

Mitch has had an introductory conversation with Megan Young of the DEC, who has offered to meet with the PC to discuss the project further. Mitch will follow up with Megan. It would be good to have Megan meet with us after we have had a chance to review survey responses and get a sense of community support for the project.

We may want to review the survey first. Sandy and Mitch will work on this and prepare to distribute the survey shortly after Thanksgiving.

Rumney School Road (update)
Mitch to follow up with Chris McVeigh to determine support for a walking path between Wood Road and Rumney.

Paula provided an update on traffic/speed control around Rumney. Four basic steps:

1. Identify the school zone.

2. Speed zone regulations. One wrinkle still to be resolved: there are clear regulations about setting speed limits on dirt roads, but not on paved roads. Paula continues to research this. Paula noted that $3000 should cover the cost of the signs, posts, and mounting hardware. Unknown, but manageable, should be installation costs. The town road crew ought to be able to handle this step, but we'll have to discuss this with them.

3. Ease congestion in the Rumney Parking lot. We might consider establishing a drop-off/pick-up zone along the recreation field, instead of using the parking lot for that purpose.

4. Consider acquiring a portable speed monitor to raise awareness of traffic speed.

Paula noted that grant money is typically available for projects of this nature.

Sandy suggested that the recently formed Road Committee seems like a logical group to spearhead this project, but they indicated a reluctance to tackle the project. If no one else is going to step up, the PC is probably best-positioned to champion the project.

Motion: Mitch moved to add $3000 to our FY25 budget proposal to cover the cost of school zone signage. Betsy seconded.
Vote to approve: 4-0.

Mitch will coordinate with Eric regarding RC availability to install signs (July/August of 2025).

Neighborhood In-fill Housing
With Elle's resignation, this project needs a caretaker. Mitch will reach out to Elle and keep this project moving along.

Budget
Sandy proposed amending our budget proposal as follows:

- Add $3000 to cover school zone signage.
- Add $400 to postage/mailing reflect higher postage costs (now $1200).
- Other items the same as last year.

Motion: Mitch moved to approve a budget proposal of $7850 for next year. Paula seconded.
Vote to approve: 4-0.

Municipal Planning Grant
Still no word on application deadline for next year's MPG applications. The Road Committee is interested in submitting an application for Middlesex.

Updated Project List
Sandy noted that there are no significant updates to this list.

New Business
None

Correspondence
None

Other
Sandy reports that a group has made some preliminary inquiries about the possibility of locating a Children's Museum in Middlesex. They've been encouraged to reach out to Russ Bennett – Planetary Matters would seem to be a good partner for such a project.

SB will post an opening for the vacant PC seat. SB will appoint someone to fill the vacancy until Town Meeting. Sandy heard from a possible interested party when we recently had a vacancy to fill – will reach out to him again. Rob Reeder, perhaps?

Next Meeting: Wednesday, Dec 18 at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment

Sandy moved to adjourn; Paula seconded.
Meeting adjourned at 7:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mitch Osiecki, Secretary Emeritus