Minutes

Meeting of the Middlesex Planning Commission
Wednesday, December 18, 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

Guests:
Russ Bennett – Planetary Matters & Galaxy of Yes
Barb & Greg Whitchurch, residents

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.

Guests Russ Bennett, Barb Whitchurch and Greg Whitchurch were also present.

Barb and Greg joined the meeting via Zoom; all others were present at the Town Office.

Mitch volunteered to take minutes.

Adjustments to Agenda
Two items added to agenda:

- PC Report for the Annual Town Report
- correspondence from the Town of Berlin

Minutes
Approval of October and November minutes.

Motion: Betsy Davis moved to approve draft minutes of Oct 16 & Nov 20. Paula Otenti seconded. Discussion: Betsy caught a typo in the Oct minutes (discussion of school zone signage around Rumney referred to Center Rd rather than Shady Rill Rd – Mitch will correct.)

Vote to approve (with above edit)**: 4-0.**

Old Business:

Middlesex Village Traffic-calming Demonstration Project (update)
Still looking at setting up & running demo project in spring 2025. We will coordinate with CVRPC to keep this moving forward.

Municipal Water System in the Middlesex Village (update)
Sandy reported that a survey has been distributed to residents of the greater Middlesex Village. We should begin collecting responses in January.

Sandy also noted that a permit has been submitted (and approved) seeking to rebuild the church destroyed by fire a couple of years ago.

Rumney School Road (update)
SB has indicated their support for our work on speed and traffic-control around Rumney. They've moved the funds to cover the cost of signage from our budget to the Highway Department, which makes sense.

There was a comment to the effect that while this project is not the responsibility of the PC, there is agreement that the project is worthwhile and folks are happy that the PC is willing to shepherd the project forward.

Mitch will keep in touch with Chris McVeigh regarding a potential walking path along Shady Rill Rd.

Neighborhood In-fill Housing

Mitch reported that he's reached out to Elle offering to share the survey she had begun preparing seeking input from residents about topics related to infill housing they might like to explore. Mitch will keep PC posted on developments.

Paula commented that she would be happy to help out with this project.

Mitch reported that there is an upcoming webinar on Neighborhood Development Areas (NDA's), designed to designate priority areas intended as potential housing growth areas. It's not clear that

Middlesex has areas that might benefit from an NDA designation, but that's a possibility. Mitch will report back as he learns more.

Brief discussion of the planned spring Energy Fair, possibly to be rebranded along the lines of Community Energy Festival. More details as plans take shape.

Budget Update

SB expressed no concern with PC budget proposal. As noted above, some funds were moved from PC budget to Highway Dept.

Municipal Planning Grant

The next round of MPG funding has been announced. Grant applications open in mid- to late-January. The Road Committee is likely to apply for a grant on behalf of Middlesex in 2025.

Updated Project List
No significant updates to this list.

New Business

Sandy shared a draft of our Town Report. Agreed to by acclamation.

Correspondence

The Town of Berlin has shared some proposed changes to their zoning regulations.

Other

Sandy reported that our submission to the CVRPC's Regional Project Priority List was not selected as one of the top ten submissions. There were more than twenty projects submitted – highly competitive.

Russ reported that Planetary Matters has roughed in a trail around the Red Hen campus. He commented that one goal was to provide a path for dog-walkers away from the green on the campus. They continue to explore additional trail ideas.

Russ also commented that Planetary Matters is happy to support the Energy Festival in various ways.

Finally, Russ mentioned that he's looking for an appropriate site to set up a firewood lot for the distribution of firewood for those in need. Sandy commented that there might be some space in the vicinity of the Fire Station or Walter Kelley Park that might work.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, Jan 15 at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment

Mitch moved to adjourn; Paula seconded.
Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mitch Osiecki, Secretary Emeritus