

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Members Present: Kevin Anderson (online), Bob Cook (online), AnnMarie Harmon (online), Alice Peal (online)

Members Absent: Emma Hanson, Brian Voigt

Staff Present: JB Weir, Zoning Administrator

Others Present: Alex Belenz (SE Group), Julia Randall (SE Group), Jonathan Ursprung

II. Regular Business.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Alice. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

2. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items.

The possibility of postponing the presentation/discussion with SE Group was raised; it was decided to keep the agenda as proposed and provide a recap at the next meeting for those not present at this meeting. Alex suggested that Emma and Brian, as well as those present, complete the related survey that had been provided to the PC (if they had not already done so).

3. Public Forum.

There was nobody present requesting to address the Commission. Alice introduced Jonathan Ursprung, who was present as a potential new PC member.

4. SE Group Bylaws/Vibrant Villages Discussion

Alex provided an overview of strategies which might be used to address Irasville bylaw modernization, noting that there are two 'categories' or set of recommendations – one for short term and one more prescriptive that could be part of master planning work. There is flexibility regarding which of these buckets various changes can be placed in by the PC.

The following strategy suggestions were discussed:

- 1A – Reduction of minimum lot size – it was agreed to move forward with a minimum lot size of 1/5 acre in the wastewater service area; there was some discussion of creating a trigger based upon connection to the system, but it was decided to not include any trigger parameters.
- 1B – Increase in allowable lot coverage – this can likely be set at 75% lot coverage and 65% building coverage at 1/5 acre minimum, although stormwater treatment may need to be considered at these levels. PC members noted that a depiction of how this might look when implemented would be helpful.
- 1C – Maximum front setback – it was agreed that either lowering the minimum in conjunction with establishing this maximum, or else allowing for a larger waiver potential in this district, would provide more flexibility. Different setbacks along the Route 100 corridor may be necessary.
- 1D – Character-based street frontage requirements – it was agreed that articulation requirements are also important, and that glazing requirements should be established for each story of a building.

- 1E – Flag-shaped lots – PC members agreed that this allowance should be included in the Village as well.
- 1F – Multi-family as permitted use – Some concern was expressed for allowing all multi-family projects to move forward without DRB review; Alex and Julia suggested that a square footage rather than number of units be the determining factor for requiring Conditional Use review.
- 1G – Mixed use structures and lots as permitted rather than CU – It was also suggested to set standards here, again using square footage as the determining factor. JB explained that some uses will still need to go through CU review.
- 1H – Residential and Mixed use allow up to three stories – Alex will look into any fire department equipment needs that might be related, such as ladder trucks. Alex and Julia spoke of gyms/rec centers being one commercial situation where greater than two stories might be beneficial.
- 1I – Minimum height of two stories for new residential and mixed use – Questions arose regarding tiny homes or small ADUs; Alex spoke of including exceptions and will look into potential waiver language as another option.
- 1J – Require two units per lot for residential development – it was noted there may be something similar to this in new legislation; it was decided to take this option out of the mix for now.

The rest of the proposals for Irasville will be discussed at the June 6 meeting.

5. Town Plan

Selectboard Hearing review – Alice reported on the Selectboard Hearing, explaining that the Board decided that Chapter 13 should be reviewed and updated before adoption of the version under consideration.

Alice is looking into whether the energy work completed is still ok for approval as is, and if the entire revision needs to go back to for CRVPC review before approval. JB does not think any extra steps will be necessary, but he and Alice will be sure to obtain clarification regarding these points.

Chapter 13 – JB explained that the Selectboard would like to update the table of Priority Tasks which is in this chapter, and that come collaboration between the PC and Annie/Selectboard will be needed. Alice indicated that the Selectboard intends to review the chart and make edits prior to passing it along to the PC for review. It was agreed that some prioritization of the tasks can take place sooner, and a related survey will be created and completed by PC members prior to the June 20 meeting.

AnnMarie will be working with JB on reviewing the list of bylaw change proposals he and previous ZAs have been maintaining. She will compile a chart for PC consideration.

Alice will invite Brian Shupe to a June PC meeting in order to provide members with a better understanding of the Selectboard's involvement in the Wastewater Project.

6. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of April 18, 2023 were amended and approved.

Discussion of a vision for Irasville will take place at the next meeting.

7. Other Business

No other business was taken up by the PC.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary