



TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016 AT 7:15 PM
ESSEX POLICE DEPARTMENT
145 MAPLE STREET, ESSEX JUNCTION, VT 05452

1. **CALL TO ORDER** [7:15 PM]
2. **JOINT MEETING WITH ESSEX SELECTBOARD**
 - a. Presentation of Thoughtful Growth in Action Final Report
3. **ADJOURN**

Meetings of the Trustees are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Village Manager's office at 878-6944.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MARCH 14, 2016**

- BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** George Tyler (President), Lori Houghton, Elaine Sopchak, Andrew Brown; (Dan Kerin was absent).
- ESSEX SELECTBOARD:** Max Levy, Chair (via Skype); Irene Wrenner, Vice Chair; Michael Plageman; Andrew Watts.
- ADMINISTRATION:** Patrick Scheidel, Municipal Manager; Lauren Morrisseau, Assistant Manager/Finance Director; Doug Fisher, Director of Administrative Services.
- OTHERS PRESENT:** Greg Duggan, Community Development Planner; Dana Hanley, Community Development Director and TGIA member; Paula Duke, TGIA; Mary Jo Engel, TGIA; Nick Meyer, TGIA; Delia Clark, Confluence Associates/TGIA; Ariana McBride, TGIA; Vanessa Zerillo; TGIA; Ron Lawrence, TGIA.
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President George Tyler called the meeting to order at 7:28 PM at the Essex Police Department.

1. JOINT MEETING WITH THE ESSEX SELECTBOARD

The Trustees were present for the final presentation of the Thoughtful Growth in Action Project (TGIA). Consultants Ariana McBride and Delia Clark thanked both boards for inviting them to present, and also acknowledged all of the TGIA participants for their hard work, especially those in attendance at this meeting. They then presented the report of the TGIA, giving a background on the origins of the project, the composition of the working group, its goals, and how the process was structured (the sequence of workshops and meetings, the survey, and other ways of getting the wider community to participate). Ms. Clark noted that she and Ms. McBride hoped that the TGIA would not become a microcosm for airing conflicting opinions about town government, and therefore decided all decisions by consensus.

Ms. McBride described some of the general findings of the working group, including: there are indeed significant differences between the Town and Village; there is a desire for collaboration between the two political entities; and the perceived need for long-range planning. Ms. McBride also noted that when it came to exploring development review, the goal of the group was not to fix something that was broken, but to continue improving the structure of town planning. She highlighted the desire by TGIA participants to make the development review process clearer to members of the public, especially helping them understand where in the process residents can have an impact on decisions. Ms. McBride stated that the focus of this working group, and hers and Ms. Clark's analysis, was on improving the governance structures in the town, rather than aspects of its outreach and community involvement.

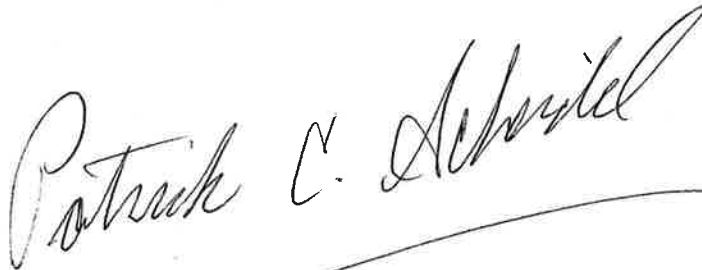
With that preface, Ms. McBride presented the following four recommendations: 1) establish a joint Planning Commission (PC) for the Town and the Village, but separate Development Review Boards (DRBs). 2) Use a phased approach to structural changes, and consider how to evaluate the effectiveness of those changes. 3) Empower boards to establish a timeframe and work with staff to make a plan for transition. 4) Continue to explore and implement ways to improve public participation in planning. She noted that one question that arose in the discussion was why there couldn't be just one PC and one DRB, and that the response was that the volume of development review, and the differences between Village and Town zoning regulations, were too much for one DRB to cover, and that having a single PC would allow for better comprehensive long-range planning.

Ms. Clark also spoke briefly about suggested several non-structural changes the Town could make to better involve the community in the planning process. These included improving communications, improving public participation, creating more open access and transparency, allocating more resources for training board members and staff.

2. ADJOURNMENT

The joint meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Patrick Scheidel, Municipal Manager



Patrick C. Scheidel
