

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
JULY 10, 2025
Approved August 7, 2025**

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Elijah Massey, Chair; Diane Clemens, Vice-Chair; Elena Juodisius; Kirstie Paschall

ADMINISTRATION: Chris Yuen, Community Development Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Natalee Braun, Toni Morgan

1. CALL TO ORDER

In lieu of a Chair, Mr. Yuen called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

2. REORGANIZATION

DIANE CLEMENS made a motion, seconded by ELENA JUODISIUS, to nominate Elijah Massey as Chair. Motion passed 4-0.

ELIJAH MASSEY made a motion, seconded by ELENA JUODISIUS, to nominate Diane Clemens as Vice-Chair. Motion passed 4-0.

3. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Mr. Yuen said that feedback from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) future land use has been included in the Reading File.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

a. Comments from Public on Items Not on Agenda

None.

5. MINUTES

a. June 5, 2025

DIANE CLEMENS made a motion, seconded by ELENA JUODISIUS, to approve of the minutes of June 5, 2025. Motion passed 4-0.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. a. Introduction of new members of Planning Commission

Mr. Yuen said that Finn Hamilton has been nominated as a non-voting student member by the City Council.

b. Update on Municipal Code Chapters 9 and 18 Amendments

Mr. Yuen said that this has been introduced to the City Council and warned for a public hearing on July 23rd. He said that the City Attorney has recommended that both visible and screened junk be subject to the same rules. Substantive changes will require re-warning the document.

c. Discussion of Connect the Junction Draft Plan

• Update on Project Schedule

Mr. Yuen said that the draft plan has been posted online and that the online open house has begun. He showed the PC the Konveio software that manages and guides the conversation.

- **Review of Draft Plan content**

Mr. Yuen discussed some of the ideas that were presented with this project, including changes to the Five Corners, Main Street Road Diet, Park Street Complete Streets Project and the Memorial Way Road Closure. The types of movements that would and would not be allowed at each intersection was discussed, as well as the potential benefits of each. A proposed weekend, and later weekday closure of Main Street could be tested. Mr. Yuen discussed the proposed height changes in the Village Center and Transit-Oriented Development Districts.

- **Public Engagement throughout summer**

Mr. Yuen said that the virtual open house will run through the summer but could be extended if needed. An in-person open house and focus groups will be scheduled. Mr. Yuen discussed previous engagement events, and the media boards used for these. He presented a list of upcoming events, including National Night Out, various Essex Junction Recreation & Parks events, Brownell Library events and the City Hall Grand Re-Opening. The PC discussed dates in September to have an in-person open house event. The PC discussed holding an ice cream social at Essex Junction apartment buildings, which has been done successfully in the past and could be effective in engaging renters. All members agreed that this would be a good idea to implement. The PC also plans on attending National Night Out. Mr. Yuen will compile a list of events and see which PC members would be interested in attending. Postcards have been designed, and flyers could be placed at bus stops. Immediate action, such as “dotmocracy” or placing dots on a question, was suggested. Notices could be placed in water or tax bills. Mr. Yuen will discuss contacting local new sources. The largest issues to be addressed with public feedback are building heights and traffic diversion.

d. Project Updates

- **Amtrak Station Renovations**

Mr. Yuen said that a full project update will be presented to the City Council on July 23rd. The project is close to grant obligations, however, is waiting on paperwork from the railroad. The main use of funds will be a steel structure that goes around the existing station and there will likely be enough funds to make changes to the road’s geometry. Renovations to the waiting room are desired however there may not be enough funds to do so. This will be further discussed by the Planning Commission in September.

- **Pearl Street Road Diet**

Mr. Yuen said a stakeholder meeting will take place next week. Additional meetings are planned with the PC and the Bike/Walk Advisory Committee.

7. READING FILE

a. Welcoming Neighbors Network slides on “Crafting Powerful Pro-Housing Messages”

b. CCRPC Memo on Essex Junction Future Land Use Map

8. MEMBERS UPDATES

Mr. Massey said that the Animating Infrastructure Grant Proposal was prepared and submitted by the City. Funding decisions will be announced in August.

9. STAFF UPDATES

None.

10. ADJOURN

ELENA JUODISIUS made a motion, seconded by DIANE CLEMENS, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion passed 4-0 at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Darby Mayville