

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 16, 2014**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Clemens (Chairwoman); John Alden, Nick Meyer, Aaron Martin, Andrew Boutin. (Amber Thibeault and David Nistico were absent.)

ADMINISTRATION: Robin Pierce, Development Director.

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order
2. Audience for Visitors
3. Additions/Amendments to the Agenda
4. Minutes
5. Work Session: Comprehensive Plan Update
6. Other Planning Commission Items
7. Adjournment

1. CALL TO ORDER

Diane Clemens called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM and announced the following:

- Heart & Soul joint meeting with Planning Commission and Village Trustees/Essex Selectboard on 2/10/14 at 5 PM.
- Heart & Soul presentation of final report to Village Trustees on 2/11/14.
- Presentation to Village Trustees on multi-purpose path on 2/25/14.
- Staff meeting with new engineering firm hired by the railroad to review rail crossing on crescent connector on 1/24/14.

2. AUDIENCE FOR VISITORS

None.

3. ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

4. MINUTES

December 19, 2013 & January 2, 2014

Tabled to the next meeting.

5. WORK SESSION: Comprehensive Plan Update

Agriculture

The following was discussed with regard to the Agriculture section in the comprehensive plan:

- Completion date for the plan update and the discussion by the Trustees of potentially hiring a consultant to develop a master plan for the village downtown area and adding that to the plan which will impact the completion date.
- In the first paragraph of the Agriculture section Map 1 is the Primary Soils map.
- In the second paragraph of the Agriculture section, delete the sentences reading:

- “The Whitcomb’s grow corn and hay silage for cows and also raise young stock. When the cows get older they move to another farm in North Williston where they are milked.”
- In the paragraph beginning “In addition to the Whitcomb Farm...” delete the parenthetical text reading: “(for example, the Belted Cow)”.
- In the paragraph beginning “This Comprehensive Plan is required to meet the State planning goals...”, sentence reading: “While, it is clear that the village is meeting this goal for their agricultural industry...” rewrite the remainder of the sentence to read: “while there is simply not much of a forestry industry within the village to encourage and strengthen, the village continues to encourage awareness and good forestry practices.”
- Add some language about urban forestry and education.
- Properly number the objectives under Goal 3 (i.e. should be Objective 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and so on).
- Rewrite Objective 3.3 to read: “Encourage backyard composting or participation in the compost program through the solid waste district.”
- Delete “if not done already” at the end of Objective 3.4. There are people working on donation of excess food from community gardens.
- Rewrite Objective 3.5 to read: “Encourage the practice of edible landscaping.”

Housing

The following was discussed with regard to the Housing section in the comprehensive plan:

- In Table 7 (Households in Essex Junction, 2010) add another data line after “Number of people living alone” that states “Number of unoccupied households” and the number “134” then insert a blank line separation between the list of data lines and the line saying “Householders with children 1,175” to avoid confusion that the total of households with children is cumulative from the data lines above.
- Include mention in the text that the village is trying to provide its share of affordable housing in Chittenden County and note the housing projects occurring in the village as a snapshot in time. Suggested language: “Support a diverse range of housing to include apartments and single family houses.” The neighborhood fabric should be encouraged to remain though.
- The text on affordable housing should encourage affordable housing in locations with existing and planned support services.
- In the paragraph following Figure 4 (Housing Growth 2012) correct the year to 2011 so the sentence reads: “While the growth seen in Figure 4 above shows the impact of zoning changes in 2011....”
- In Section 7.6 (Housing Goals):
 - Replace Objective 1.3 with “Promote adherence to state energy standards and consider energy conservation standards and alternate energy resources in all future codes.”
 - Replace Objective 1.4 with “Encourage development in established growth areas.” to emphasize the village center is already targeted for high density development.
 - Delete the word “elderly” in Objective 1.6.

- Delete Objective 1.7 (zoning changes to preserve single family stock) because converting older houses in core areas is more desirable ~~to~~ than new construction on Greenfield sites.
- Add an objective to read: "Compile rental registry and rental inspection program if funding is available."
- Renumber the objectives as appropriate.

6. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

Minutes to be approved at next meeting: 12/19/13, 1/2/14, 1/16/14.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.

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