

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
March 20, 2014**

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

ADMINISTRATION: None.

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
 - Business/Economic Development
 - Energy
 - Land Use
 6. Other Planning Commission Items
 7. Adjournment
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1. CALL TO ORDER

Diane Clemens called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM and announced the meeting with Essex Planning Commission at 6:30 PM on Thursday, March 27, 2014 at the town offices.

2. AUDIENCE FOR VISITORS

None.

3. ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

4. MINUTES

February 20, 2014

MOTION by Amber Thibeault, SECOND by Nick Meyer, to approve the minutes of 2/20/14 as written. VOTING: 4 ayes, 2 abstentions (Aaron Martin, David Nistico); motion carried.

March 6, 2014

MOTION by Diane Clemens, SECOND by Aaron Martin, to approve the 3/6/14 minutes as written. VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.

5. WORK SESSION: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

There was discussion of the focus of the plan not being on costs associated with commuter traffic, but on how to get commuters going through the village to stop and shop. Also, the plan recognizes that the circ highway is not likely to be built and the

village is taking other steps to mitigate traffic congestion including building the crescent connector, pedestrianization of a short section of main Street at the Five Corners, and other road improvements.

Business/Economic Development

The following edits were made to the 'Business/Economic Development' section:

- Correct the year in the header to "2014".
- Page 29, paragraph beginning "While the location of Essex Junction..."
 - Change "five major highways" to "three major highways"
 - Insert "and local" between 'commuter' and 'traffic'
 - Delete "as well as the direct budget costs associated with street " and "traffic computers"
- Page 33, Section 3.6 IBM, 1st paragraph ("Essex Junction has maintained a strong employment base...")
 - Delete "with approximately 5,000 employees"
 - Move the sentence "The village should support development policies..." to the end of the next paragraph (paragraph beginning "In recent years the IBM site...")
- Page 33, Section 3.7 Implementation Strategies
 - Begin paragraph with "The Village Planning Commission endorses the implementation strategies and should engage in policies to make progress on the strategies as opportunity arises. The village is particularly interested in maximizing success in the transit specific strategies as identified in #4 (regional multi-modal improvements), #10 (freight rail service expansion), and #12 (transit oriented development)."
 - In strategy #12 delete "698"
- Page 34, Business/Economic Development Goals
 - Objective 1.3 - rewrite to read: "Consider performing market studies or other effort to identify and attract businesses to the village to enhance village life."
 - Objective 1.5 - rewrite to read: "Encourage opportunities for bandwidth improvements."
 - Objective 1.7 - rewrite to read: "Work with Essex Economic Development Committee to help identify underutilized structures in the village and assist in matching the landowners with business prospects."
 - Objective 2.1 - delete the word "willing".
 - Objective 2.4 - delete the entire statement and renumber the subsequent objectives accordingly.
 - Objective 2.7 - rewrite to read: "Conduct market studies as needed to attract key businesses to the village to reinforce the vision and identity of the community."
- Page 35, Business/Economic Development Goals
 - Goal 4 - change "speedy" to "timely".
 - Objective 4.2 - rewrite to read: "Provide application checklist of all requirements for each stage of review."

- Objective 5.3 - rewrite to read: “Establish local historic districts or other mechanisms to preserve existing residential structures of significant historic village character along major arterials and in historic neighborhoods.”
- Renumber Objective 5.4 to Objective 5.5.
- New Objective 5.4 to read: “Create a list of noted historic sites and buildings to supplement Map 2.” Map 2 needs to be updated and needs supporting documentation of why each site/building is historic.
- Objective 5.5 reads: “Continue streetscape and landscaping efforts to attract private sector investment.”

Energy

The following edits were made to the Energy section:

- Page 21, 1st paragraph, 1st sentence - delete “and has far reaching impacts globally” and rewrite the 2nd sentence to read: “The Village of Essex Junction is a jurisdiction where energy use and production are vital concerns which impact overall quality of life in the community.”
- Page 22, Strategies for how to lower residential energy use - insert text on Pages 25 and 26 about home weatherization and new construction.
- Page 23, Municipal
 - Change heading of “Municipal” to “Municipal Lighting”.
 - Rewrite 3rd paragraph (formerly 1.2.1) to read: “Streetlights in the village are currently mercury vapor. High pressure sodium lights are not allowed according to the Land Development Code. Existing streetlights in the village should be upgraded to the most efficient technology available as practicable. The use of architectural or period style lighting is encouraged.”
 - Rewrite ‘Regarding parking lot lighting’ to read: “Current village policy requires compliance with the Regional Planning Outdoor Lighting Manual for Vermont Municipalities.”
 - Land Use & Transportation, 1st sentence – change “with which” to “in which”.
 - Verify the number of barrels of petroleum consumed.
- Pages 24-27, Sections 1.2 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), 1.3 (Reduce Energy Consumption...), 1.4 (Low Income Energy Assistance), 1.5 (Underground Storage Tanks) – format in the same style as the other sections in the comprehensive plan.
- Page 28, top of page, paragraph beginning “Within Essex Junction the State of Vermont reports...” – change “Appendix G” to “Appendix A”.
- Page 29, Energy Goals
 - Goal 7 – rewrite to read: “Ensure that new and replacement street lamps utilize the most current and efficient energy technology.”
 - Objective 7.3 – rewrite to read: “Meet or exceed the current adopted version of the Regional Planning Outdoor Lighting Manual for Vermont Municipalities.”

- Goal 8 – rewrite to read: “Support a variety of transportation options including walking, biking, public transit that reduces reliance on the automobile.”
- Goal 16 – delete from this section because the goal is more aesthetically directed than energy directed. The goal could be moved to another section, such as utilities or facilities.

Land Use

To be covered at the next work session.

6. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

None.

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Aaron Martin, SECOND by Amber Thibeault, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Rcdg Scty: MERiordan

