

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MAY 5, 2016
AGENDA
6:00 P.M.**

Meeting Postponed from April 21, 2016

- I. Audience for Visitors**
- II. Additions or Amendments to Agenda**
- III. Minutes**
 - A. Regular Meeting – April 7, 2016
- IV. Work Session – Updates for Land Development Code**
 - A. Review of approved draft of Land Development Code.
- V. Other Planning Commission Items**
- VI. Adjournment**

This meeting will be held at the Essex Junction municipal building at 2 Lincoln St., Essex Jct., VT. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request to the Village, 878-6950, to assure that Village meetings are accessible to all individuals regardless of disability.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 5, 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Nistico, Chairman (arrived after meeting started); John Alden, Amber Thibeault, Nick Meyer, Andrew Boutin. (Diane Clemens and Joe Weith were absent.)

ADMINISTRATION: Robin Pierce, Development Director; Will Hayden, intern.

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

AGENDA:

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Until the arrival of Chairman Dave Nistico, John Alden facilitated the meeting and called the meeting to order at 6 PM.

2. AUDIENCE FOR VISITORS

None.

3. ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

4. MINUTES

April 7, 2016

MOTION by Amber Thibeault, SECOND by Nick Meyer, to approve the minutes of 4/7/16 as written. VOTING: unanimous (4-0 David Nistico not present for vote); motion carried.

There was discussion of streetlight intervals and the recommendation to reduce the interval to 150'. Robin Pierce explained there is a hierarchy of lighting levels for trunk routes versus residential streets. Robin Pierce and John Alden will join the Village Engineer to view street lighting in the village.

5. WORK SESSION: LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATE

Temporary Structures

The Planning Commission reviewed the email from Wayne Beebe, dated 4/24/16, regarding temporary structures in backyards, such as hockey rinks, and associated lighting and noise. It was noted recreational lighting is normally associated with rec fields. Backyard lighting does not need a permit. The level of lighting is controlled and

cannot emanate off the property. Following further discussion there was agreement to add the following definition to the LDC:

- Temporary Structure. Any structure in place greater than six months in any 12 month period shall not be considered a temporary structure.

Sign Exemptions

The Planning Commission discussed Section 714.Q regarding sign exemptions. Nick Meyer commented serious consideration should be given to allowing an illuminated message sign by historic Lincoln Hall after the significant investment for restoration (\$500,000) and the potential for more such signs to occur in the village. There are many other ways to disseminate information other than illuminated message signs. Dave Nistico noted the Trustees can approve a sign on village property so it is better to have a definition of the process in place. Following further discussion the Planning Commission concurred with the suggested language in the LDC.

Building Height

There was discussion of whether “average grade” is determined from the preconstruction existing grade or after fill is brought in. The following wording was added to the LDC:

- Building height shall be no higher than that permitted in the district above preconstruction grade unless approved by the Planning Commission.

Plantings

Nick Meyer suggested tree species from the most current update of the Vermont Urban Community and Forestry Program plantings list be used. Section 719.E was modified to read:

- E. Approved Plant Materials. An emphasis shall be placed on selecting species native to Vermont and the Champlain Valley. Trees and plantings that are close to driveways, sidewalks, and roads shall be salt tolerant. Generally, plants shall be from the most current updated tree species list recommended by the Vermont Urban Community and Forestry Program and those listed in the Village Land development Code.

MOTION by John Alden, SECOND by Nick Meyer, to approve the modified Land Development Code including the changes made on 5/5/16 (definition of temporary structure, clarification of average grade, and plantings list) and with one minor streetlight language clarification. VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

6. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

Trees

- Nick Meyer announced the Tree Advisory Committee has planted trees on Main Street and in front of Maple Street Park.
- Arbor Day celebration is scheduled on 5/14/16 at 10 AM at Maple Street Park.
- Nick Meyer and Robin Pierce will attend an Arbor Day Conference on 5/6/16 to receive the Tree City USA Award for the village.

Train Station

John Alden mentioned the recent visit to the train station by Sen. Leahy to announce advances in the border crossing pre-clearance legislation. Robin Pierce said he urged having the train station updated for the train going to Montreal (passengers should board the train in Essex Junction) because it is less expensive to upgrade the station than upgrade the track from Burlington to Essex Junction.

Minnesota Bike/Walk Paths

Nick Meyer said he attended the talk by the Mayor from Minnesota on their award winning bike/walk path system.

Town Plan Award

John Alden noted the Town of Essex received an award for their town plan.

Next Meeting(s)

May 19, 2016: Application(s)

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by John Alden, SECOND by Nick Meyer, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous (5-0); motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7 PM.

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