

**TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**  
**Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, July 16, 2024**

**Members Present:** Bob Cook, Emma Hanson, AnnMarie Harmon, Becca Newhall, Alice Peal, Jonathan Ursprung

**Members Absent:** Beth Cook

**Staff Present:** JB Weir, Planning and Zoning Administrator

**Others Present:** Cindy Carr, Dara Torre

**II. Regular Business.**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Jonathan Ursprung. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

**2. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items.**

The order of items to be addressed was rearranged.

**3. Public Forum.**

Dara Torre and Cindy Carr introduced the concept of providing for a public pool as part of the Master Planning work. There was some discussion of past efforts toward a pool, and mention of other local residents who are also interested in this topic.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of June 18, 2024 were approved.

**4. Alice Update**

CVRPC – Alice reported that the update to the Natural Resources chapter of the Regional Plan is close to completed, and that the Energy chapter is now under review. Two new updates to Energy chapter requirements need to be taken into consideration, and Eli Toohey of the RPC is available to present to the PC what needs to be included in their upcoming Town Plan update. Alice indicated that there has been some discussion regarding whether to have separate chapter(s) for flood recovery and climate change topics, or to have related information woven through the entire document.

Climate Action Plan – Alice reported that the five-year update process beginning, with a subcommittee having been formed for each individual chapter review; Alice is working on the Rural Resources and Resilience chapter, which has tracks for infrastructure, community planning, and public health.

LHMP – The final draft is under review, and Alice indicated that the document will go before the Selectboard for a public hearing in August. She noted that a bit of information has been added to this iteration, and that the updated document will include a presentation of measures the Town should undertake for resilience/mitigation.

Potential for repairs to the Meadow Road bridge was discussed, due to both the bridge being flooded at times as well as the extensive use it sees when other roadways out of the Valley are not usable.

Alice explained that she will send some important points related to legislative bills that were passed/vetoed/overridden, and that she will provide a report on these at the next PC meeting.

## **6. Village Master Planning**

AnnMarie reported that she was present at the July 8 Selectboard meeting and able to answer questions; the Board approved the contract with SE Group at that meeting. She then reported on the initial Steering Committee (SC) with SE Group, where Alex provided a review of the project's scope and the role of the SC was outlined. A meeting has been scheduled for the third Tuesday of every month, and the SC will be seeking to get other community organizations in attendance at some of those meetings. A 'walking' meeting of the area is also likely to be scheduled in the coming months.

AnnMarie indicated that at the initial meeting, the SC members each outlined their hopes and concerns about the project, which provided helpful input for the group. Some of the topics raised were planning for more vibrancy in the village areas, housing needs, pedestrian friendly configurations, and the need for incremental changes to be implemented.

Inclusion of transportation/bus service needs was discussed by the PC as another important aspect of the upcoming work, as was the importance of economic stability. JB explained that local residents will be brought into discussions related to these and other aspects of the project, some of these discussions may be held at PC rather than SC meetings. He also noted that he is providing SE Group with various documents from past Town work related to the same issues that the project will be addressing. JB and Alex will put together a list of landowners in Irasville who should be included in the project earlier rather than later. The PC also discussed the need for a pharmacy in town and how this should be discussed as a part of the project. Bob also mentioned the economic challenges in town and that commercial growth should remain one focus of the project.

Alex will likely report to the full PC at a September meeting.

In relation to discussion around housing increases, it was agreed that STR regulation is in the purview of the Selectboard.

## **7. Wastewater Planning Project Update**

JB highlighted some of the funding information he had included in the meeting packet, noting that the Town has been allocated an additional million dollars of State ARPA funds for use in completing the final design work for the system. He also reported that the latest Intended Use Plan (IUP) rankings have been published, and that Waitsfield has a score of 88 points and it eligible for \$5.2 million in pollution control money, or more if other towns are dropped from the IUP list.

Additionally, Emily Hackett (DEC) has requested an estimated project cost summary, as more ARPA funds may be available for construction of the system.

JB also noted that it is possible that the project may need to go through Act 250 review; it is still being determined if a large enough area of impact is included in the project plans and would thus make Act 250 necessary.

The PER should be wrapped up soon, and communication is ongoing with priority properties, although many responses have been received from those landowners.

**8. Other Business**

No other business was taken up.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary