

**TOWN OF WESTFORD**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 15, 2021 MEETING**  
Approved on December 20, 2020

**Commission Members Present:** Koi Boynton, Seth Jensen, George Lamphere, Mark Letorney

**Also, Present:** Alan Huizenga - Green Mtn Engineering, Taylor Newton - Chittenden Regional Planning Commission, Dave Gauthier - Resident, Kim (last name?) - Resident, Ira Allan - Resident

**The Meeting Began:** 6:33pm

**Amendments to Agenda:** Melissa is not able to join us. Other people are joining for topic specific items - items might move around to accommodate this.

**Citizens to be Heard, Announcements, Correspondence & Other Business:** None

**Minutes of the November 1, 2021 Meeting:** Not available

**Minutes of the November 8, 2021 Meeting:** Not available

**FY21 PC Town Report:** PC members reviewed the draft.

**VOTE:** Seth makes a motion to approve the FY21 PC Town Report

Koi seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

**ARPA Committee Update:** The committee will meet on Wednesday at the Library. They are looking for feedback from residents and determining a process for suggestions. Requests are out for residents to complete the ARPA funding survey.

**December Newsletter/FPF Article:** Seth will work on a piece that explains form based code. Koi asks if the housing partners could develop a piece for the PC to share on FPF. The PC agrees this makes sense. Koi will reach out to Green Mountain Habitat.

**Community Wastewater Project**

**Progress Report:** Alan Huizenga joined the meeting. Drilling is happening now. Letters have gone out to end users for site visits for surveying. 5 visits are scheduled. Contract documents are being pulled together with final design. The contractor for geotechnical work is in place. A date needs to be confirmed for the work on the ledge on Brookside Road. Notice has gone out to community members to confirm that geotechnical will be

happening in the next few days. Melissa is prepared to notify residents of work. The team pulled together paperwork for the State ARPA funding.

**NBRC/EDA Grant Administration/Agreement:** This item needs to wait until Melissa.

**State ARPA Village Wastewater Funding:** Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) was looking for the latest information. Melissa and the contractors compiled materials and sent them in.

**Community Wastewater Public Outreach Update:** This weekend will be the site visit to the soil based wastewater system on North Road. This system's capacity is 10,000 gallons/day and has been in working order for 30 years. The proposed community system is 12,000 gallons/day. RJ Morre that maintains the North Road system will be on site to answer questions and walk people through how the system functions. There is a FB group invite and it is on the Westford's Future page. A Mad River Valley Tour is scheduled but confirmation of how many people are going is needed.

**Financial Scenario/Tax Impact Spreadsheet:** JB joined the meeting and presented scenarios she put together that demonstrate tax impact based on the percent of grant secured. She determined how much money was based on revenue per \$0.01 tax rate. The different scenarios show how the various levels of grant secured will impact taxes per \$100,000 assessed property value. It also provides user fees per month with an anticipated two additional users per year, over five years. The Town could see a higher rate of new user fees as reserve capacity cost to the town decreases. The rate should be adjusted every five years. Based on the scenarios the total cost per year for a typical, single family unit with 65 to 75% grants could be \$56.39 per month. JB talked through the scenarios. It was then discussed what happens if the Town subsidized the monthly user free cost by charging more to the Town wide tax rate over 25 to 32 years. JB discussed the genuine effort at the State level to get Westford at an affordable user rate. The project team will be meeting with the State tomorrow to discuss the cost analysis that has been put together. It is pointed out that the cost analysis is acceptable by the State. The State has asked for the information to inform possible funding for Westford. The PC discussed how to communicate with the SB regarding the cost analysis. It was decided that as soon as there is more feedback from the state the SB should be informed. The cost analysis does demonstrate that as more users are added the cost to the town decreases. Thanks was passed on to the project team for pulling together numbers to move the conversation with the State forward. JB pointed out that the response was incredibly helpful in creating the cost analysis and understanding what is affordable

for the end users.

**Draft Town Meeting Warning Language:** It was discussed that Nanette was hoping for this language in early December but the legal requirement is January. The developed draft language explains that it is an Australian ballot and voters do not need to be present to vote. Getting this language in front of the SB again would be good. The SB, Nanette and the Town lawyers should have a look at it. The SB might want to see the determined figures plugged in. The ballot needs to be discussed at three meetings prior to Town Meeting. JB will work with Nanette on the timeline and steps for the Town Meeting article.

### **1705 Rte. 128 Property Project**

**Public Engagement Meeting Follow Up, Public Comments & Outreach:** Taylor Newton joined at 8:30. The public engagement follow up survey is running through the end of the week. FPF has been active. Taylor has some answers and the beginning language for a FPF post. He can work with Mark and Melissa to respond to the constructive comments. It seems that there is a misconception that the project allows unbridled development and the lack of details is an issue. It is discussed that the current project is completely conceptual to develop a plan and therefore the details come later. The conceptual plans do make it challenging to understand the size and scale of the project. The aerial views do not demonstrate what the streetscape would look like. Since the appraisal cost is coming in under budget, there is some funding to ask SE Group to create a better visual representation of the conceptual site plan. Kim voiced concern that the buildings (in the conceptual plans) are really close to the road. She feels that the openness on the Common is a really positive quality. It is pointed out that the setbacks are from the right away and the parking behind the building is likely more visually pleasing. It is pointed out that the buildings are actually a little further away from the road than the town office and a little closer than the Pigeon house. Ira reinforces that parking on the road would be a challenge in the winter. Taylor will continue to work on a draft FPF post and get it to Mark and Melissa. It was requested that the partners be included in any FPF post. There seemed to be confusion, after the public engagement meeting, regarding cost and who does what. It would be good to frame out the partners and their roles. Start to put the partner out in front so that the scope of the project and the partner's roles are very clear. Public communication should include why the partners are interested. It was discussed to wait until the survey responses come in so that the preferred plan can be developed. Taylor will be setting up a meeting with VT Community Development Program (VCDP) to talk about the grant budget and the new discovery of the second tank and how it impacts the project. The second tank might actually be on Town right of way. VTrans would like to see it gone this sprint. It is under the road. Moving ahead with the VCDP meeting next Monday. The land survey will be provided by Friday. This will determine who owns the land where the second tank is.

**2021 Work Plan:** Newsletter needs to be submitted on the 22nd. December 6th is the next PC meeting. December 9th will be the joint meeting with SB. George will confirm this with Nanette. December 20th there is a PC meeting. PC meetings are the 1st and 3rd of the month - in January, the PC will meet on the 3rd and 17th.

**Adjourn:** 8:55pm