

Hartford Planning Commission/Town Plan Steering Committee Meeting

4/30/18

Approved Minutes

Attendance: The following individuals attended the meeting which was held at the Hartford Town Hall in Meeting Room 2 at 171 Bridge Street in White River Junction on Monday, April 30, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. Introductions were made.

Bruce Riddle	Planning Commission
Robin Adair Logan	Planning Commission
John Reid	Planning Commission
Dave Sherman	Planning Commission Applicant
Chris Lowe	Zoning Board of Adjustment
Martha McDaniel	Energy Commission
Angie Emerson	Conservation Commission
Dylan Kreis	Community Resilience Organization
Kim Souza	Selectboard
P.J. Skehan	Chamber of Commerce
Lori Hirshfield	Director of the Department of Planning and Development Services
Matt Osborn	Planner

Draft Minutes of the April 9, 2018 Meeting: Matt Osborn asked if there are any corrections to the Minutes of April 9, 2018. There were no corrections and the minutes were accepted as written. Martha McDaniel asked if we need to have such detailed minutes. Matt responded that it is important to document the meetings and it helps when looking back to previous meetings. Bruce Riddle agreed noting that the plan update process is fairly long and it is good to have detailed minutes.

Public Input for the Town Plan: Lori Hirshfield reported that staff is working with the consultants who are under contract to do public engagement for the Energy Plan, including a community meeting that would be part of the Town Plan public engagement. The consultants (Rebecca Sanborn Stone and Delia Clark) are working out details and a cost estimate for four additional community meetings. Lori noted that it is important to have continuity and consistency to the meetings and help guide the post 2019 Plan update. She also noted that we need to think strategically about goals, policies, strategies and recommendations for the current update. As for other input, Lori stated that the Town did a community survey in 2016 that can be referenced. She also noted that a survey was completed in the last year or so by the Parks and Recreation Department, a parking study and survey and a Town Forest survey that can be used.

Lori asked the Steering Committee if they think staff should have consultants facilitate the community meetings. John Reid asked if there will be a good turnout at the five village meetings. Lori responded yes, that it has worked in the past. Lori stated that the cost of the four additional meetings would range from \$3,100 to \$4,100. She added that besides facilitating the meeting, the consultants will prepare for the meetings, summarize the meetings and come out with tangibles. Martha McDaniel, chair of the Energy Commission, stated that she participated in interviews with three consultants for the Energy Plan work. She thinks Rebecca Sanborn Stone and Delia Clark are highly qualified. Dylan Kreis, chair of the Community Resilience Organization Hartford, commented that he has worked with Rebecca and Delia and thinks they are very skillful facilitators. There was discussion and consensus that the Town should pursue hiring a consultant for the public engagement process. Lori will confer with the Town Manager about it after getting a proposal from Rebecca Sanborn Stone and Delia Clark.

Lori stated that the meetings will take place late May to mid-June. The Steering Committee will discuss the details at the May 14th Steering Committee meeting. Staff will start working on scheduling dates and venues.

Population Chapter: Lori Hirshfield noted the desire to reduce the size of each chapter and make the Plan more visually engaging. She stated that staff needs to zero in on the important information and data. Martha McDaniel suggested an historical compendium of population data. P.J. Skehan suggested using infographics. Chris Lowe stated that there is a great deal of redundancy that can be eliminated.

Lori Hirshfield noted the importance of using the Plan to support grant applications down the road. Robin Adair Logan agreed. She also noted that it is important to retain historical information. Bruce Riddle suggested including the meat in the Plan and providing supplemental information on the website.

Matt Osborn and Lori Hirshfield went through the existing Population Chapter. Lori noted that she did not think the 2010 census in Hartford was very accurate. Matt noted that the recession resulted in a much higher vacancy rate that led to a population decrease in 2010 even though there were several hundred new housing units built in the 2000s. Lori added that there is currently a very low vacancy rate in Hartford. Lori listed some of the population issues that should be addressed in the population chapter:

- Aging population
- Seasonal population
- Need to keep young people from leaving
- Age distribution
- Single person households
- Single parent households
- Homelessness

Bruce Riddle suggested looking at USAFacts.org. John Reid suggested looking at home schooling numbers. Matt presented updated population projections from 2013 that provided two scenarios, one with moderate growth and one with population loss for 2020 and 2030. Matt noted that staff thinks the population growth scenario is more likely.

The Steering Committee provided feedback on the individual sections of the chapter and the tables. It was clear that the length of the chapter could be reduced.

Next Meeting: Lori Hirshfield noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 14th. She stated that we will be discussing community engagement, historic preservation and housing. She asked the Steering Committee to review both chapters.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.