

DRAFT
Pittsford Planning Commission Meeting
January 25, 2024

Board Members Present: Kevin Blow, Rick Conway, Robb Spensley, Derek Blow, Mark Pape, Donna Wilson

Board Members Present via Zoom: Mike Norris

Others Present: Jeff Biasuzzi

1. Meeting - Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Derek Blow – Chair.

2. Approval of Meeting Agenda

A motion was made by Kevin Blow and seconded by Rick Conway to approve the agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Approval of Minutes

. November 30, 2023

A motion was made by Kevin Blow and seconded by Robb Spensley to approve the November 30, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting minutes. **The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Public Comment

There was no discussion held.

5. Old Business

a) Grant Status Update

Derek Blow reported that the Town Manager advised the MERP grant was approved for \$4,000. This will cover the cost of the enhanced energy plan development with assistance from the RRPC. Mr. Atherton advised the MPG grant was not awarded to the Town for renewal of the town plan. The Modernization grant was awarded to the Town that will include a first installment, a second installment with a progress report and upon completion full reimbursement will be received. Derek Blow noted the amount of the grant was not specified and is for the bylaw amendments to the zoning. It was suggested to confirm the amount of the loan with Logan Solomon of the RRPC. Robb Spensley stated the Town Manager had indicated there could possibly be some other options for assistance with the town plan. Derek Blow advised the Town is allotted a certain number of hours as a member of the RRPC and will confirm with Mr. Solomon how many hours the RRPC will assist the Town with the town plan.

b. Enhanced Energy Plan and Next Steps for Future Town Plan

Donna Wilson stated Logan Solomon emailed a preliminary list for the Planning Commission for the Town Plan review. Jeff Biasuzzi advised VLCT is big on using a template that allows towns to modify with details regarding demographics. Mr. Solomon is well organized and will be able to produce the updates at meetings. He will count on the Planning Commission to provide input on what is required. The Committee has ample time for the Plan update and the main focus will include the enhanced energy plan that will be the most significant change. Mr. Biasuzzi advised West Rutland will be holding a public hearing on their revised town plan on February 5th. Rick Conway stated there is similar language between

Pittsford's and their town plan and they cited state statute throughout the document. Mr. Biasuzzi stated their format is new to West Rutland and is a result of Mr. Solomon's assistance and suggested this may be the template used.

Mr. Conway wanted to confirm the Commission was awarded the grant to do the energy plan. Donna Wilson noted concern that the grant was submitted by the deadline but should have been done much sooner. It was noted the grant had been approved for the enhanced energy plan. Mr. Conway stated the Select Board wants the Planning Commission to do an enhanced energy plan as well as an update to the town plan and would be helpful to confirm the cost of the RRPC in this process. Mr. Conway suggested the Commission members review both West Rutland and Brandon's town plans. There was a big concern about wildlife corridors in the past and it now looks like it specifically requires there be habitat corridors included. Landowners were not pleased with the wording of wildlife corridors. Mr. Biasuzzi noted West Rutland had elected to stay at the same level with their energy plan in having due consideration rather than substantial deference. Mr. Conway wants to ensure the Select Board is aware the Planning Commission was not awarded the MPG grant. Donna Wilson questioned if there is just one planning grant per year. Derek Blow will consult the Town Manager whether there could be additional grants available. Mr. Biasuzzi noted that it is well worth having the RRPC's assistance with the revisions as Mr. Solomon is good at keeping panels on schedule. Mr. Conway reiterated he wanted assurance that the Select Board is aware there could be costs and that the MERP grant will cover the cost for developing the enhanced energy plan. Mr. Biasuzzi noted wildlife corridors are not required this year by the State and questioned if it is the Commission's intent to have the enhanced energy plan a free-standing ordinance or incorporated into the town plan. Robb Spensley questioned the role of the Select Board. It was noted that the Planning Commission will create the plan and hold a public hearing. If there are not substantive changes from the hearing, the plan is approved for submitting to the Select Board for their approval. The Select Board will hold a public hearing and approve the plan to be forward to the appropriate State group for approval. Donna Wilson agreed to be the direct contact with Logan Solomon. She will contact Mr. Solomon as to whether there are any additional grant opportunities. Derek Blow will also contact the Town Manager and Select Board regarding follow-up on the information discussed during this meeting. Rick Conway suggested touching base with the Select Board regarding the Planning Commission's work with the RRPC on the enhanced energy plan.

There was a discussion regarding the new legislation with regard to affordable housing. Mike Norris stated property taxes are projected to go up 15 to 20% and asked how a developer can allocate to the PUD a number of structures for affordable housing when the needle is moving and the cost basis is moving rapidly in our current times. Rick Conway noted that houses increased 30% in one year in the West Rutland plan. Mr. Norris stated with a developer's requirement for 3 of 10 lots being affordable housing with labor and materials having increased, he doesn't understand how a developer will handle this. Mr. Conway noted there is no stability currently with inflation and the cost of housing. Donna Wilson noted when asking regional about affordable housing in Killington, the reason those contractors are not required to comply is that they are not using federal money. Mr. Norris stated if the taxes increase the needle moves, and all material increases will also move the needle and it will be difficult for developers to comply with the legislation. Mr. Norris noted it is asking developers to build, risk and lose money due to the laws imposed, so developers won't move forward with building which will worsen the problem. Jeff Biasuzzi reported the RRPC has been promoting a residents' survey of their proposed plan and encouraged people to participate. One question is how one would like to see affordable housing and input can be provided. Mr. Norris noted more groups need to have conversations and direct the legislature. Robb Spensley suggested adding a statement in the town plan regarding the moving needle as it would be good to point out facts that exist in this challenging atmosphere.

In summary, Derek Blow advised he will contact the Town Manager and Select Board regarding the questions previously discussed. Donna Wilson will contact Logan Solomon regarding the number of hours that the RRPC will provide the Town, potential grant availability and the deadline for use of the grant funding. It was suggested to invite Mr. Solomon to a subsequent meeting to discuss the process.

c. 10-Acre Town/Subdivision Concept

Rick Conway had not spoken with all members of the Select Board regarding this subject. Mr. Conway noted the Commission is aware of what the priorities are, and suggested if the Commission has time, work could be done on the subdivision concept. Jeff Biasuzzi reported the Town did get full funding for the zoning regulations and when the work is done on the regulations, it can be decided at that time whether the Town wants to be a 10-acre town. Mr. Biasuzzi stated there is no deadline on the zoning regulations. Derek Blow advised Mr. Solomon of the RRPC has indicated he will assist

with this and Mr. Blow will confirm the deadline for using the grant. Rick Conway stated if the change is made, it will do away with the Zoning Board and will go to a DRB Board. Mr. Biasuzzi provided information on the difference between a DRB and a zoning board.

6. New Business

Jeff Biasuzzi provided the Commission with a draft of the Zoning report for the Annual Town report for review. Derek Blow advised he had also submitted a Planning Commission report for the Annual Report and provided a copy for the Commissions' review. All Commission members reviewed both reports and adjustments were made to the Zoning Administrator's report.

7. Next Meeting

February 22, 2023, 7:00PM at the Pittsford Town Office

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Kevin Blow and seconded by Robb Spensley to adjourn the meeting at 8:35PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary

Approved by,

The Pittsford Planning Commission