

Royalton Planning Commission

APPROVED – Minutes

Monday, November 22, 2010

Members Attending: Barcelow, Brandau, Judge, Levasseur

Guests Attending: Christian Petrangelo (Note Taker)

Meeting came to order at 7:03 PM.

1. Minutes, November 8, 2010

- Levasseur said that Heading #3 should read “Luna Bleu,” not “CVPS.” Heading #4 should be “CVPS,” not “Utility Poles.” The first set of bullets under Heading #5 (“Driveway Access, Mastine”) should go under Heading #2 (“GW Plastics”).
- Barcelow move to accept minutes as amended. Judge seconded. All in favor. Motion carries.

2. Evaluating the Vermont Smart Growth Scorecard: Do we want to look at any changes in the unified bylaws?

- Levasseur stated that she would like to review the Scorecard to see if anyone has any additional input.
- Brandau, referring to page 4 of Scorecard, inquired whether the current bylaws sufficiently express RPC’s opposition to sprawl and the “pollution of space” between our towns.
- Levasseur asked how we can encourage and convince people about cluster development. For example, Town of Pomfret had big difficulties creating a “25-acre (lot) town.” How does RPC propose something that seems so onerous?
- Brandau added that, as with Act 250, the chosen threshold number (i.e., of acres) will be the focal point for developers. Development will occur on and around that number.
- Judge emphasized that cluster development tends to work more with major commercial developments where density bonuses are available.
- Brandau expressed his concern that the bylaws properly support the town’s mission of preserving town centers and accessing open space.
- Judge thought that townspeople would generally like to be protected from big developments.
- Brandau stated that bylaws will work if they take into account these concerns. If bylaws go through, we would need a development review

- board and a way to conduct hearings and take testimony.
- Levasseur, referring to page 8 of Scorecard, asked how local regulations provide for open space and new developments.
 - Levasseur recalled that Rebecca (Beguin) commented last week that we have some wording about open space, but that does not necessarily mean public space.
 - Levasseur added that condo associations have internal rules separate from local zoning.
 - Brandau mentioned Seattle as example of a “well-parked” city. But does Vermont require the same given the state’s large open spaces? We could give density “bonuses” to those who build more compactly.
 - Levasseur referenced Scorecard’s letter G, addressing taxes or dedicated funds to protect prime working land. Too big a burden on the taxpayer?
 - Brandau said that some towns use land trusts to achieve such goals.
 - Levasseur stated that tax abatement may be a good idea.
 - Brandau clarified that, in general, people are still taxed on their “highest developable good.”
 - Levasseur mentioned Town of Barnard as place where land trusts are used.
 - Judge inquired about status of bylaws.
 - Levasseur responded that Scorecard gets us to evaluate the proposed bylaws. When we feel that we are ready, we can send bylaws to Select Board and others for review. To give us time to send out bylaws for outside-party evaluation, we are *not* preparing for next town meeting.
 - Judge and Brandau suggested submitting current draft of bylaws to Select Board for a run-over.
 - Judge added that informational hearings could be useful.
 - Levasseur suggested reading over bylaws at next meeting to see if anything “sticks out.” If approved at next meeting, then draft may be submitted to Select Board for presentation and public comment.
 - Brandau inquired if next move constitutes a legal adoption process.
 - Levasseur and Judge responded no. Levasseur clarified that it would be something more like “initial review by Select Board.”
 - Brandau moved to take action on bylaws pursuant to aforementioned conversation. Judge seconded. All in favor. Motion carries.
 - Judge suggested sending a draft with colored highlighting to Select Board as a guide to recent amendments.
 - Barcelow suggested tidying up the draft’s index and related areas before sending it to Select Board.
 - Levasseur agreed to make a note on this.

3. New business

- None.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Barcelow moved to adjourn. All in favor. Motion carries.

Meeting ended at 7:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christian Petrangelo
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