

**DRAFT
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

MINUTES: February 4, 2016

Board members present: John Snee, Howard Burgess, Barbara Pulling, Dana Peterson, Alan Biederman, Norman Cohen

Ms. Pulling opened the meeting at 7:05 P. M.

The Commission reviewed the January 21, 2016 Planning Commission minutes. Mr. Cohen made a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Burgess made a second to the motion. Motion passed 3-0. Mr. Sneed and Mr. Biederman abstained from the vote.

Ms. Pulling reported that Rutland Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Mr. Ed Bove will not make the meeting but will attend the February 18, 2016 meeting.

Ms. Pulling questioned if the Commission should take a position on the Ecos Solar Proposals. Commissioners discussed the matter and no action was taken.

The Commission discussed the agenda format for the Town Plan March 3, 2016 Public Hearing.

Commissioners discussed how it will notify Town residents affected by changes to the Town Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM). Commissioners decided that all residents of the Town should be notified of changes, not only those affected. Mr. Biederman offered to draft a letter explaining Changes to the Town Plan.

Mr. Burgess and Mr. Zingale, Jr. will compile a list of landowners of parcels affected by changes to the Town Plan.

Commissioners discussed who will make presentations at the March 3, 2016 Public Hearing. It was decided that Mr. Biederman will address the new View Shed section and Mr. Peterson and Mr. Burgess will address changes to the FLUM.

The Commission discussed the Rutland Town / West Rutland Smart Growth Connection Plan (SGCP) final report. Ms. Pulling distributed copies of the report to Commissioners. Mr. Zingale told Commissioners that he does not believe Center Rutland Land Use Designations are the reason there has not been growth in Center Rutland as claimed in the SGCP.

After reviewing the report, Mr. Biederman said:

- There is no market for new businesses.
- The Rutland area is depopulating.
- Economics in this area are vastly different than in Chittenden County.
- Does not believe it is a land use problem but rather an investment issue for new businesses.

- Mr. Biederman said The SGCP is a joke.
- Mr. Biederman questioned whether installing a marble walkway would bring in investors.
- Mr. Biederman said there should not be any changes made to the Town Land Use Map with regard to the SGCP.
- Mr. Biederman said if the Land Use Map is holding any Town resident back all he/she/they would have to do is talk with the Commission.
- Mr. Biederman noted the only time this SGCP may come into use is if there is new construction. There has not been any new construction in over 40 years in the area.
- Mr. Biederman made a recommendation the Select Board do nothing with the study. If the Select Boards adopts the SGCP it will become Town Policy and that will affect future Act 250 hearings.

Alternate Planning Commission Mr. Fred Nicholson gave Commissioners background information regarding the SGCP. He told Commissioners that the original intent of the study was to identify economic opportunities associated with the installation of the water and sewer line along Business Route 4.

Mr. Nicholson said the study was not intended to be a Smart Growth type study.

Mr. Zingale said the SGCP proposal to eliminate and reduce the number of curb cuts is not in the best interests of the Town. He cited examples where VTRANS closed several curb cuts in Town along US Route 7. Mr. Zingale said he does not have a 9L concern because any growth would not be new since the area has long been developed. He said the area is clearly in decline.

Mr. Peterson said beautification should be the Commission's priority for improvements to the Route 4 Corridor.

Mr. Fred Nicholson suggested the Commission receive and file SGCP and take no action. He said the project was not intended to be a Smart Growth Study and should not be made an official document.

Mr. Burgess cited the fact that all of the properties in the SGCP plan are privately owned and are not controlled by the Town.

Ms. Pulling requested the Commission table the subject.

Mr. Cohen made a motion to adjourn at 9:03 P. M. Mr. Peterson made a second to the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

