

Town of Guilford

December 5, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting Notes—draft

Call to order: 6:45 pm

Recognition of Public—no public

PC members present: Michelle Frehsee, Jethro Eaton, Nathanael Matthiesen, Henry Evans, Chuck Clark, Lynn King, Jackie Gaines, Thayer Tomlinson, Tanya Balsley

Next Meeting: 6:30pm, Wednesday, January 23, 2019

Old Business:

- 1. Planning Commission Update to the SelectBoard scheduled at 6:30pm December 10, 2018:** PC has worked on staying abreast of several issues, finalizing the Energy portion of the Town Plan, drafting FAQs for the Flood Ordinance, listening and providing input to the Kirchheimer Drive Solar Project, and following updates on the Living Communities Challenge. We look forward to the next year creating the Welcome to Guilford Handbook. Michelle encouraged as many PC members to attend the December 10 Selectboard meeting as possible.
- 2. Living Communities Challenge Update:** Lynn and Jethro attended the recent Living Communities Challenge meeting. Lynn gave an update on her impressions of the meeting; she noted that the VT Dept of Natural Resources has studied the field off Partridge Road to determine if the land is available to build senior housing. She has concerns regarding development of senior housing in this area. Michelle noted that we should check in on this to track this work since there is a portion of land in Algiers off Partridge Road that was set aside for senior housing and can only be developed for senior housing. Jethro noted that one of the presenters gave examples of other projects in VT and northern MA that are working to create more accessible public spaces rather than focusing on overdevelopment of land and sprawl. Michelle noted that Broad Brook Community Center (formally the Grange) is petitioning the Town in March to help pay for building upkeep for Town events. The point that there is a lot of momentum happening across the Town and that Guilford Center is becoming more of a hub for growth. A lot of different groups are trying to improve the Town and it is the PC's role to understand. Michelle suggested we invite members of the BBCC to our next meeting. The PC had a long discussion on how to work with new initiatives in order to govern change rather than stop change—and to ensure that growth and change happens in a responsible manner. Harry noted that when 91 was built, the project changed the Town dramatically and yet the Town survived. Jackie noted that the PC's job is channeling the momentum of growth to do the best we can to put things in check and provide balance.
- 3. Better Connections Grant:** This is a grant that that would ideally make Algiers safer (sidewalks, signage, etc.). The State of VT provided feedback to those interested in applying for the grant noting that the Town would have to do a lot more work prior to applying for the grant with a specific project. This ties to the Living Communities Challenge mainly because it is based in Algiers. Nothing will happen in the next 2 – 3 years at this point; Michelle noted that if this grant application were to go through, the PC would need to apply on behalf of the Town.

4. **Guilford Handbook Discussion:** The handbook is to focus on what we are and what our vision is. Jethro shared copies of the Dummerston Handbook and heard that this project took Dummerston a great deal of time and resources, but they created a great handbook. Everyone liked the level of information that is contained in the handbook. Michelle has spoken with the Town on our plan and how we hope to pay for the Handbook. Would like to share the outline at our Town Meeting. Michelle noted that she'd like the PC to focus on this project for the next 6 months. The goal is to make this an interactive project to engage as many groups and authors as possible. Tanya highlighted that having a binder at Town meeting to get participation and input from everyone in town would be a great way to get ideas for the handbook. Lynn suggested we assign tasks to the groups who we profile in the handbook. Lynn suggested we do the layout in the Jan Brett style. Jethro will follow up with Dummerston to ask them if they are OK with us copying their handbook to distribute to our PC members to review prior to the January meeting. If they are, Tanya made a motion to have Thayer make copies of the Dummerston handbook and mail them to each member to read in advance of our next meeting; Nathanael seconded the motion.

Meeting Closed: 8:00pm