

**Town of Warren
Planning Commission
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, July 24, 2023**

Members Present: Camilla Behn (Vice Chair), Jenny Faillace, Macon Phillips, Dan Raddock (Chair), Jim Sanford, Adam Zaikowski.
Staff Present: Ruth Robbins, Zoning Administrator, Carol Chamberlin (Recording Secretary)
Others Present: Jared Alvord (WVFD), Jeff Campbell (WVFD), Alice Cheney, Lexi Leacock (CVRPC Rep)

Agenda:

1. Public Comment
2. Lexi Leacock, Warren's CVRPC Representative
3. Jeff Campbell, WVFD Chief, solar installations ordinance
4. Priority Subcommittees
5. New and Other Business

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Public Comment

Nobody requested time to address the PC.

Lexi Leacock, CVRPC

PC members thanked Lexi for taking this role. She provided some information regarding her participation on the Executive Committee of the RPC and explained that focus has recently been on the Regional Plan update. PC members asked that she keep them informed as this progresses. Lexi also outlined the West Central Vermont partnership of the RPC and the region's Economic Development Corporation, noting that this is intended to be a comprehensive economic development strategy.

Lexi also provided an update on the progress in steps necessary to potentially receive MERP grant funding to complete energy audits of municipal buildings, and subsequently have implementation work completed. There was some discussion of the Town's current heating/cooling/solar configuration and connections.

Dan raised the topic of the PC's working on an Enhanced Energy Plan; Lexi offered to provide links to related recordings provided by CVRPC.

Jenny offered to send information to the PC regarding an upcoming town leadership summit.

Adam offered to work with Lexi on looking into potential locations and other logistics of a new solar installation, prior to her presenting to the Selectboard regarding the use of related grant funds.

Jeff Campbell, solar installations

Jeff, along with Jared Alvord (Assistant Chief), presented information to the PC regarding a proposed ordinance. Jared explained that the Department's concern is generally focused on residential installations and associated safety concerns, and noted some of the specifics addressed in the proposed language. These include labelling of equipment, access to shut down mechanisms, and location setbacks from structural configurations. The men also noted that this is the first of several proposed ordinances related to electronics, including battery storage and electric transportation such as vehicles, bicycles, and scooters.

PC members expressed their support for the proposed solar installation ordinance.

Reports from priority subcommittees

LUDRs update – Camilla provided an update on the LUDR review progress by the Selectboard, noting that there have been beneficial discussions on several topics.

Town Garage – No updates from the committee, but Camilla reported that a recent safety evaluation has indicated that there are many needs at the two current buildings.

Communications – Macon and Camilla had not yet had an opportunity to meet.

Short Term Rentals – Dan is gathering information regarding how other towns have approached STR regulations/registration.

Housing – Jenny and Macon have met and are working on refining the written concept they are developing. Jenny explained that they plan to focus on affordable workforce housing. Macon has pulled together information from previous work which indicates that 56 housing units are needed; Jenny would like further information regarding the statement in the Town Plan that points to 6-10 affordable housing units being possible at the Town Garage site. With PC support of the concept, the team will work on gathering more information, including determining what partners may be part of the process. Several points were made by other members:

- Investigate if a housing committee at the town or MRV level would be beneficial
- Keep Irasville in mind as a central location closer to services
- Strategies are needed to reduce the cost of building – shared infrastructure, etc.
- Involve local business owners, as they have a need for employees
- Randolph may have received grant funds for addressing affordable housing
- Consider life cycle costs
- Keep in mind that other factors affect the area’s affordability – taxes, health care, etc.
- Explore funding opportunities
- Morrisville’s creation of a position to assist with the development process
- MERP mini grant funds available, although some of these have possibly been earmarked for creation of a list serve.

New and Other Business

Dan reported that the MRVPD continues working on developing a 5-year plan, focusing on their mission and priorities, and that the subcommittee work on draft bylaws is also ongoing.

Camilla noted that there are still funds available through the Downtown Improvement Grant that was awarded, and that the Selectboard will be discussing potential projects in August. Jenny asked if funds from this might be used for the school playground; it was explained that the school is no longer Town property, and that an MOU is being developed between the Selectboard and the School District.

Ruth reminded the members that information had been provided regarding the recently passed HOME Act. Camilla indicated that the Selectboard will consult with Brandy regarding what from this Act needs to be incorporated into the draft LUDRs.

Minutes were signed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Planning Commission

Jim Sanford date

Camilla Behn date

Jenny Faillace date

Dan Raddock date

Michael Bridgewater date

Macon Phillips date

Adam Zawistowski date