**SOUTH HERO PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES October 5, 2022**

**Members Present: Michele Gammal (Vice-Chair); David Roy; George Harwood; Fred Bartle (via Zoom).**

**Members Absent: Sandy Gregg (Chair)**

Others Present: Donna Boumil; Emily Klofft (NRPC); Greta Brunswick (NRPC); Martha Taylor-Varney (ZA).

**M. Gammal** called the meeting to order at 6PM.

**Changes to the Agenda** There were none.

**Public Comment** There was none.

**Continue 2023 Town Plan – Results of 9/7/22 Village Vision Workshop**

Emily Klofft and Greta Brunswick of Northwest Regional Planning presented a flip sheet of the results of the September 7 public Village Vision workshop held at Worthen Library. The results were for both South Hero and Keeler Bay villages and included participants’ visions of the villages today and proposed future visions, and how they compare to the current zoning bylaws. Many comments related to comparisons between RT 2 and quieter residential roads within the villages, walkability, industry, recreation, wastewater, and commercial growth. The full flipchart is attached at the end of these minutes.

Maps of both villages were used by participants to comment on proposed locations for commercial and/or residential development, recreation, and open space. Comments included having separate cluster development, leaving some open space within the village districts; keeping commercial development along RT 2; including only parts of larger parcels in village districts rather than expanding the zone to include the boundaries of larger parcels; defining ‘industry’; having a defined area along RT 2 for commercial development.

**F. Bartle** commented that there was no discussion about mixed-use (commercial/residential) development. Do people realize both types of development can happen together? Greta responded that this type of development can create a livable area that can support everyone. Greta asked the Commission if the current village vision needs changes based on the conversation so far – size? How to be developed? Future zoning bylaws will reflect what is in the future own Plan. The purpose statement in the Plan should match that of bylaws. The 2015 statement was conceptual. The 2023 Plan will have a designated map showing land use purposes.

**M. Gammal** commented that there needs to be a thriving local Island economy. There is a need for housing and businesses. G. Harwood added that the Commission needs to step back and realize that growth is going to happen, both commercial and residential. What do we want it to look like? New zoning can concentrate development. Old zoning spread it out throughout the Town. Development in South Hero is limited by lack of infrastructure. Additional municipal wastewater would allow more development, but options there are limited.

**D. Roy** suggested considering a plan to consider an alternate town center for commercial and residential development, off RT 2. Perhaps running parallel to RT 2 but creating a village center that avoids the traffic issues on RT 2? **G. Harwood** suggested developing an official map. What would be the size? Identify this concept in a new vision statement. Greta asked if the Planning Commission wants more information on this idea. This would be a long-term vision. Should this be incorporated into a draft vision?

Additional discussion concerned questions about whether the South Hero Village District should go all the way to Keeler Bay, encompassing what used to be the Shoreland zoning district. Keeler Bay village includes the lakefront because the lake is so close to the village/RT 2 area. But there were concerns that the villages’ 40-ft. height limit along the lake could unintentionally allow development to block views for homes behind them. **D. Roy** stated that he was inclined to leave it as part of the village district based on connectivity. **F. Bartle** commented that the size of properties and wetlands in this area limit the amount of development and agrees that the district should remain as is. Greta asked – does it make sense to include areas that cannot be developed? Should the villages have graduated zones that include mixed-use and residential (Mixed-use Residential, Residential District)? Greta said that this gives her a direction for the villages section of the Plan. She and Emily will look at the schedule to begin drafting the Plan and will meet with the Commission at their Oct 19 meeting to map out the project going forward.

**ARPA Committee Update**

**D. Roy** will be meeting with the Selectboard at their Oct 24 meeting with suggestions from the Planning Commission on how the Town’s ARPA funds should be allocated. Suggestions include:

1. The South Hero Meeting House
2. Town Salt Shed
3. Town Park
4. Physical infrastructure
5. Childcare
6. Substance Abuse
7. All-wheel drive ambulance
8. Expand Fire District #4 (within the villages only)
9. Sidewalks

**D. Roy** announced that he wanted to propose a rendering of RT 2 in South Hero Village, a visual that could be used to market for future grants. **F. Bartle** suggested consulting the 2000 Traffic Calming Study. He will send it to each of the Commission members.

**Wastewater Planning and Assessment Committee Update**

**G. Harwood** reported that the wastewater committee met with consultants Otter Creek Associates to locate wastewater areas that might have enough capacity. Options will be considered at the next meeting on 10/24.

**Old Business – Weekend I the Islands**

**M. Gammal** reported that plans are complete for the weekend of Oct. 8-9. Town taking part are South Hero, Grand Isle, and North Hero. Some participants from Isle Le Motte and Alburgh are also taking part as ‘guests’ of participating businesses.

**New Business** There was none.

**Meeting Minutes**

**G. Harwood** moved to approve the minutes from September 21, 2022; **D. Roy** second. All in favor.

The next meeting will be October 19, 2022.

**Adjournment** 7:55PM – **D. Roy** moved to adjourn; **G. Harwood** second. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Taylor-Varney, ZA

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** For the Planning Commission

*These minutes are unofficial until approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting. All motions were unanimous unless otherwise indicated.*