

SOUTH HERO PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

November 20, 2024

Members Present: David Roy (Chair); Don Bedard (Vice-Chair); Michele Gammal; Brooke Scott; Joan Falcao

Others Present: Tim Maxham; Martha Taylor-Varney (ZA)

Changes to the Agenda

Add to **New Business** – discussion on Planning Commission Rules of Procedure

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

- A. Update from last meeting's discussion with Phil Scott -- Martha reported to the Commission that Phil Scott said that the remaining funds (approx. \$18,000 to 20,000) from the SHORE grant, which must be spent by the end of 2024, can be used for signage related to bicycle routes in South Hero. He had asked if there were any sign rules or restrictions that the Town had. The South Hero sign ordinance is for commercial signs only, not road signs. He will need to ask the Selectboard for permission to post signage on Town roads since they are the road commissioners. He Town has no logo or branding that could also appear on the signs, so a generic bicycle may be added for now.
- B. Continue discussion on multi-modal path – **D. Roy** wants to contact property owners along the proposed area of South St. He said he has software that can help to see who will be impacted. Will there need to be a review by an engineer for safety concerns? **M. Gammal** wondered if there were other towns with examples of multi-use paths. **B. Scott** asked what the timeframe was for the off-road Marsh bicycle trail. Should the South St. path prioritize just walkers and kids? **J. Falcao** asked how the trees (roots) along South St. will be impacted by the path. There will be some impact but not enough to damage them. **D. Bedard** said this may also be an opportunity to plant new trees to replace some that have already been lost (emerald ash borer, etc.)

New Business

J. Falcao asked the Commission to consider how many members are required to add changes to the agenda at the beginning of a meeting. The PC's options in their Rules of Procedure include a unanimous decision, two-thirds of the members present, or a simple majority.

****J. Falcao** moved to require a majority of the members in attendance to authorize changes to the agenda after it has been posted; **B. Scott** second. All in favor.

Approve Minutes from November 6, 2024

**** D. Bedard** moved to approve the minutes of November 6, 2024; **J. Falcao** second. All in favor.

Administrator's Report

ZA Martha Taylor-Varney told the Commission that Northwest Regional Planning Commission has received a grant from Vermont League of Cities and Towns to update the Zoning Administrator's Handbook. The current handbook is from 2005.

Announcements

Selectboard meeting on November 11 – Wastewater discussion: **J. Falcao** and **D. Roy** attended. The Selectboard is considering the wastewater available on the Lavin parcel and whether the Town should purchase the parcel to have access to the wastewater and has asked the Planning Commission how it fits into the goals of the Town Plan. The Plan references the need for additional septic for commercial

development in the village districts, but the Plan does not include specific implementation actions. The town has a grant for acquisition and planning and would own the septic capacity and put in the force mains. Emily Hacket, of Vermont DEC,, attended the November 11 SB meeting to discuss the proposal. Joan said the first 19 minutes of the LCATV recording of the meeting was very helpful to understand the issue. *[The link to the meeting will be attached to the PC minutes on the Town website]*. Joan will ask Emily if she could attend the PC's Dec. 4 meeting. The Commission's questions include who would be the users, what will the uses be for the land, would the septic be for new development or to fix old/failed systems? How much could the Town be on the hook in the future? Commission members will prepare questions to ask Emily Hacket at the next meeting. **T. Maxham** asked who would be paying for the infrastructure – the users or the town? **M. Gammal** suggested the Commission draft a letter to the Selectboard stating how the proposal fits into the Town Plan and how it doesn't. **D. Roy** will prepare this for the next meeting.

Meeting House – Sandy Gregg sent a report on the current status of the Meeting House renovation. She sent a list of funding that has been secured so far, and updates on lead study results, architectural plans, and the schedule for work to begin. *[Her report will be attached to the PC minutes on the Town website.]*

Town Office Committee – The Town office employees met with Liza Kilcoyne of AES Northeast on November 20 to review a draft floorplan for the new office.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be Wednesday, December 4, 2024 at 6PM at the Town Office.

Adjournment

7:19 PM – D. Bedard moved to adjourn; M. Gammal second. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Taylor-Varney, ZA

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
For the Planning Committee

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