



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Type:..... **Regular**
Date:..... **Tuesday, August 4, 2015**
Time:..... **7:00 p.m.**
Place:..... **Municipal Building Community Room**
Address:..... **43 Bombardier Road, Milton, Vermont 05468-3205**
Contact:..... **(802) 893-1186**
Website:..... **miltonvt.org**

1 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

2 The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
3

4 **2. ATTENDANCE**

5 **Members Present:** Lori Donna, Chair; Julie Rutz, Vice-Chair; Tony Micklus; and Henry Bonges

6 **Members Absent:** John Lindsay

7 **Staff Present:** Jacob Hemmerick, Planning Director; and Brandy Saxton, Consulting Planner of PlaceSense

8 **Public Present:** Ron Harding and Linda Shiffler
9

10 **3. AGENDA REVIEW**

11 Hemmerick stated that the date listed on the Agenda for Minutes is incorrect and should be changed from
12 the 29th to the 21st of July. Micklus stated that Lindsay is volunteering with National Night Out and may
13 arrive late or not be able to attend.
14

15 **4. PUBLIC FORUM**

16 Mr. Harding and Ms. Shiffler of Milton Falls Court expressed their concern about a neighboring property
17 owner's dogs and associated barking. The residents explained that the neighbor, Mr. Barrett, has -- over the
18 past eighteen years -- routinely had more than fifteen dogs at a time. Harding explained that the Selectboard
19 directed him to come to the Planning Commission after speaking at Public Forum on [June 15](#) [see 00:34]. The
20 Commission and residents discussed the Town's Dog Ordinance and the Zoning Regulation's definition of a
21 "kennel" and concluded that it would be best if Mr. Harding write down a history and possible solutions.
22 Harding noted that St. George has effectively addressed this definitionally.
23

24 Hemmerick cautioned that even if there is a solution for the problem that could be addressed in the Zoning
25 Ordinance instead of the Dog Ordinance, there are zoning violations that are recorded in the land records
26 and go uncorrected for extended periods until an intransigent owner wants to sell or refinance, or the
27 Selectboard opts to take a violator to court.
28

29 Bonges explained that the Commission fully intends to tackle this and other animal issues in town, but noted
30 that the Interim Zoning is the top priority at this time.
31

32 **5. STAFF UPDATE**

33 Hemmerick noted that a new Town Planner will be joining the Planning Office on August 17th, and stated
34 that the Staff's bimonthly Memo will be issued Friday with more details on the Department's activity.
35

36 **6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

37 The Planning Commission TABLED elections until the next meeting by UNANIMOUS CONSENT to allow
38 participation by the full Commission.
39
40

1 **7. OLD BUSINESS**

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3 **7(A). Zoning Alternatives Technical Review**

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5 The Commission continued to review and prioritize alternative zoning approaches prepared by PlaceSense
6 to help address Interim Zoning, Comprehensive Plan, and other relevant goals.

7
8 Micklus and Rutz shared their assessments of the alternatives and Donna submitted a list of her preferred
9 priorities.

10
11 The Commission generally prioritized improving the aesthetic of the US Route 7 corridor by elevating
12 dimensional and development standards and emphasizing the need to consider tools that lead to more
13 predictable outcomes -- especially as it relates to Planned Unit Developments (PUD) when the scale of a
14 project is not commensurate with the regulatory intentions underlying the PUD concept. Along this vein,
15 the Commission discussed the merits of allowing more flexibility for multiple principal uses and structures
16 on a lot without triggering the PUD review process, and further considered allowing more flexibility for
17 minor site plan reviews to facilitate a straightforward administrative approval when proposals meet the
18 established standards. The Commission further found that projects of larger scope ought to trigger higher
19 and more specific standards that help achieve coherent development with an appealing character and
20 quality amenities, particularly for multi-family residential or mixed-use buildings.

21
22 The Commission and PlaceSense discussed approaching new Town Core zoning standards through the use
23 of overlay districts versus zoning district boundary and use changes. The focus of either approach would
24 roughly aim to improve the overall aesthetic of the US 7 corridor, create a central downtown in the DB1,
25 create neighborhood nodes at US Route 7 between Main and Cherry in the M5 District and at near Racine
26 and US 7 in the M4 -- as well as explore appropriate transitions in-between the downtown and nodes.

27
28 Commissioners further emphasized the importance of a pedestrian downtown and infrastructure, as well as
29 greater street connectivity and an expanded grid, particularly in Checkerberry where a connector has been
30 prioritized in several planning documents. There was also discussion about the best locations for auto-
31 dependent or transit-oriented uses, often classified as "transitional" in the *Plan* that are not compatible with
32 the creation of a walk-able downtown center. Saxton cautioned that auto-oriented retail in anticipation of an
33 interstate interchange at W. Milton would likely meet opposition from the conservation advocacy
34 organizations for any proposal that aims to lift sewer restrictions. The Commission noted the current
35 situation at the Randolph interchange.

36
37 There was also discussion about more realistically depicting developable land not otherwise constrained by
38 development or natural resource restrictions/limitations and the importance the zoning map plays in
39 communicating development potential. As district priorities shift, Hemmerick noted that the Commission
40 may wish to consider having a sunset for site plan approvals to ensure that projects that go unrealized have
41 the opportunity to be brought in line with current standards; he explained that Milton's lack of a sunset is
42 rare.

43
44 Saxton encouraged the Commission to consider some public outreach where residents are given an
45 opportunity to explain places and developments they find appealing and would like to see in Milton. Using
46 images and comparables, PlaceSense could then deconstruct the most important physical and measurable
47 characteristics that the community would like to see prioritized in the regulatory language.

1 At the next meeting, the Commission will discuss outreach and the timeline in further detail. Saxton will
2 return for the first September meeting with some more detail on prioritized concepts.

3
4 **8. NEW BUSINESS**

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6 **8(A). Interim Zoning Work Plan and Timeline**

7 The Commission agreed to aim for a 12-month timeline and would focus on breaking down a critical path at
8 the next meeting.

9
10 **9. APPROVAL OF MINTUES**

11
12 **8(A). June 21, 2015**

13 Micklus MOVED to TABLE this item until the next meeting, SECONDED by Rutz. Unanimously
14 APPROVED.

15
16 **9. ADJOURNED**

17 Rutz MOVED to adjourn at 9:20 p.m., SECONDED by Bonges. Unanimously APPROVED.

18
19 **Minutes approved by the Commission this _____ day of _____, 2015.**

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22
23 _____
24 **Lori Donna, Chair**

/jmh

25 **Filed with the Town Clerk this _____ day of _____, 2015**