

Franklin Planning Commission Joint Meeting
with
Water District and Select board
Homestead Dining Room
January 17, 2017 @ 7:00 pm

7:00 p.m. Call to order

- Approval of minutes

- Old Business
Discussion of all old business

- New Business

1)Jes Alexant Chairman, Water Commission would like to follow up on his brief introductory discussion of last year, to start developing some proposed language in conjunction with the Planning Commission for enhanced protection of the Town's Webster Spring water source. It may be appropriate to integrate some water protection provisions into the Town's Development Regulations and Town Plan, which I understand is in the process of being updated.

2) Comments from Select board members

3) Go over questions for Taylor and his Answers which are as follows
Here are some questions for you Taylor:

Can you please tell us the percentage of accomplishments so far on the plan and Zoning (How many chapters are done and how many more to do)? The PC has completed 10 of 15 chapters of the Town Plan. Remaining chapters that need to be reviewed by the PC include energy and land use. Some of these "complete" chapters, like transportation, would likely need to be further amended if the Town chooses to pursue the enhanced energy planning per Act 174. The attached schedule shows the chapters that have been completed and the chapters that still need to be reviewed by the PC (red is complete and black is incomplete).

What do you feel we need to still do in order to receive approval from the NRPC? See the attached schedule.

NRPC now provides two types of approvals: "regional approval" and "determination." Regional approval refers to the conformance with statute and the regional plan (this is a process outlined in statute that's been around forever...). "Determination" refers only to the enhanced energy planning (if a community chooses to pursue it).

For regional approval: Once the PC has completed a draft, I'll have another staff member at NRPC do a preliminary review of the plan to ensure that the requirements of state statute are met and that the plan is in conformance with the Regional Plan. I think the current draft plan is in good shape, but this review will confirm.

For determination: NRPC will need to get Franklin the required data (coming by the end of April). The PC would then need to amend the Energy, Transportation, and Land Use sections of the plan, at minimum.

Can we write our own energy plan? The PC can amend the Town Plan on its own at any time. This includes making amendments to meet the enhanced energy planning requirements per Act 174. That said, if a community completes enhanced energy planning on its own, and does not use the data provided by the regional planning commission, the "burden of proof" that is required in order to receive "determination" is higher. How much higher? Well that is supposed to outline in a "guidance document" to be released by the Department of Public Service. That document is forthcoming, but can be found here when it is available: <http://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/act-174-recommendations-and-determination-standards>

Can you please tell us when you think Act 174 will be finalization and they will have a set way to achieve and what we would have to achieve? To my knowledge it's finalized. Here is what you need to do:
http://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs_Plans_Reports/Act_174/Municipal%20Determination%20Standards_Final.pdf
f. An abridged version is here: http://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Pubs_Plans_Reports/Act_174/Municipal%20Standards_Abridged_Final.pdf.

Can we please get a couple copies of the wind and solar maps in their color coded form? What do you mean color coded? Would you like digital or hard copies?

Also, the PC wanted a copy of the Energy section of the Swanton Town Plan.

That is easier said than done. Attached is the copy of the currently proposed amendments (to put the amendments in context you'll need to see the whole plan located here: http://townofswantonvermont.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/0/3/12032471/town_plan_2015.pdf). The Swanton PC held a hearing on these amendments, but I don't think the Selectboard held a hearing or adopted these amendments.

The amendments proposed by Swanton would not meet the "determination" requirements in Act 174 (Swanton developed their amendments before the legislature adopted Act 174). Even if Swanton did not pursue "enhanced energy planning" and just did a normal town plan, it's my opinion that the proposed amendments would not have much (or any) weight before the Public Service Board because they do not constitute a "clear, written community standard" with mandatory language. To my knowledge, Swanton did not have an attorney review the proposed amendments. Therefore, I would not encourage Franklin to adopt similar language if the PC's goal is to have a stronger voice before the Public Service Board.

4) Taylor Newton to go over more work on Town plan and Development Regs.

- Public Comments
Any concerns of members or community

Next Meeting Feb. 21, 2017