

12-03-2019 Hearing for the Town Plan

Planning Commission Members Present:

Stuart Levasseur
Geo Honigford
Jim Rikert
Sarah Danly
Nell Gwin
Bushrod Powers
Roni Johnson

Attendees:

Tim Murphy, Royalton Selectboard
Brad Salzmann, Royalton Conservation Commission
Peter Anderson, Sharon Planning Commission

Minutes:

Called to order at 7:05 pm.

- An attendee asked about what the Planning Commission had decided regarding process for updating floodplain regulations.
 - The current Plan draft includes a recommendation to consider updating these regulations, but the public engagement process and decision will not occur until after the Town Plan has been adopted.
- An attendee was interested to note that the town's southeast corner has a habitat connectivity block.
- PC members noted that as we don't have zoning, this plan only really affects projects that go through Act 250. Without zoning, you have surrendered some local control to the state: with zoning, Act 250 only applies over 10 acres. Without zoning, it applies to developments over 1 acre.
- Attendees and PC members noted the interest in having a town Energy Committee and discussed partnering with VLS to allow their energy students to serve as a town energy committee. It was also noted that Royalton not a part of the 7-town energy committee being formed by neighboring towns.
- An attendee asked about the impact of removing the Royalton Village bridge and not maintaining the uninhabited stretch of Back River Rd.
 - A PC member noted that that stretch of road could be used as recreational area/walking trails.
 - PC members noted that this route is the only alternate when 14 is flooded or otherwise closed and that the State has an interest in keeping the Royalton bridge.

- Attendee (Tim Murphy of the Royalton Selectboard) noted that FEMA will not help repair Carpenter field again so the next time it floods the ball field will be moved to the town offices and Carpenter will be vacant.
- PC members noted that for both the Royalton Bridge and the Fox Stand bridge have abutments too close together; this allows the bridges to withstand flooding such as Irene but causes other washout damage to the river.
- An attendee noted that Otto Merrill Road has good properties for development and asked what it would take to turn that into a Class 3 Road and provide secondary access to that side of town.
 - PC members noted the steepness of the road, especially for a through road, and that it lies in a high priority forest block.
 - Attendee noted that VLS is interested in helping develop cross country ski trails on the Crawford lot and throughout Royalton.
- The suggestion was made that the Selectboard host an annual gathering of all the town committees to regularly meet new members and facilitate collaboration.

With no further input from attendees, Bushrod Powers moved to adjourn and Roni Johnson seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:01pm.