

Town of Chelsea, Vermont

Planning Commission

2023 July 18 Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Planning Commission Members: Bob Brannan, Chair
Gregg Herrin, Secretary
Absent - Ed Kuban
Justin Sauerwein
Absent - Neil Kennedy
Shenia Covey

Selectboard Members: None

TRORC Representatives: Sydney Steinle

Community Members: None

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order on 2023 July 18 (Tuesday) at approximately 7:00pm, at the Chelsea Town Library.

Old Business

Prior Meeting Minutes

Decision Summary: Draft minutes approved for the meetings held on 2023 June 01, 2023 June 14, and 2023 June 29.

Community Feedback

Bob Brannan confirmed that he posted to the Chelsea Facebook page and Front Porch Forum community associated with the Town to gather input. No one has provided feedback yet.

Introduction Chapter, History Section

Justin Sauerwein completed his review of the History section of the Introduction chapter, and recommended that the existing content remain as-is, with no additional edits required. The other attendees all accepted this recommendation.

Education Chapter

Bob Brannan provided paper drafts of a proposed rewrite of the entire Education chapter.

- Bob Brannan** to email an electronic copy of the proposed Education chapter rewrite to all Planning Commission members, to facilitate easier review and comments.
- Planning Commission members** to review the proposed Education chapter rewrite.

Utilities and Facilities Chapter

The idea of reorganizing the Utilities and Facilities chapter was discussed. It was agreed that in general it is more prudent to err on the side of fewer changes to avoid excessive work and increased likelihood of introducing errors during the short timeline available for getting the Plan approved.

Decision Summary: The Utilities and Facilities chapter will remain as one single chapter.

Justin Sauerwein contacted Karen Lathrop, the Town Clerk, and confirmed that all of the improvements listed in the Chelsea Town Hall section have been completed. As such, there is no need to include the list in the updated Plan.

Justin Sauerwein also discussed storage concerns with Karen Lathrop, and confirmed that there is still a challenge related to the Town Clerk, Lister, and Zoning Administrator all sharing a very small space. They currently stagger schedules, but that also causes coordination challenges. Records could potentially be digitized, but many are still required to have some sort of hardcopy (but it can be shrunk). The vault is essentially the size as a walk-in closet, but the existing contents that need to be actively maintained are relatively small. It may be possible to consult the state guidelines for records retention, and possibly transfer some records to the Historical Society or the School District if they are not required for the Town to retain.

Sydney Steinle confirmed that all town-owned lands should be included in the Public Lands section, and any omission of parcels is not intentional.

Justin Sauerwein spoke to Alan Ackerman, the Fire Department Chief, and confirmed that hydrants in the village are in good working condition.

Justin Sauerwein spoke to Mike Whipple from the Water Department, who indicated that the yield of the Town's wells is more than adequate for the demands of the system. He also indicated that there is a fourth well (not currently listed) next to the old Town Garage, which is no longer in use. It is unclear if this well has actually been decommissioned, or possibly just valved off.

New Business

Timing for Plan Approval

To meet the timeline for the current Plan not to expire, it would require that we send out notifications to neighboring towns and other stakeholders 30 days prior to a Planning Commission hearing, which

needs to be between August 21 and August 24. Final changes need to be made by September 8. The Selectboard hearing needs to be September 19.

The Planning Commission can suggest changes (including an entire rewrite) at the first hearing.

While a hearing is required by statute, a forum is not required and is more about exchange of ideas.

Decision Summary: Do not host a public forum, but do have the hearing as required.

Sydney Steinle to email schedule out to the Planning Commission.

Recreation and Parks Chapter

Various comments, clarifications, and edits were discussed throughout the review of the chapter. Changes will be incorporated in an upcoming revised draft from Sydney Steinle.

Health and Emergency Services Chapter

Various comments, clarifications, and edits were discussed throughout the review of the chapter. Changes will be incorporated in an upcoming revised draft from Sydney Steinle.

Natural, Scenic, and Cultural Resources Chapter

A question arose regarding referenced maps (such as “Map #3”) which do not appear in the Plan document itself. Sydney Steinle clarified that all maps are available on the TRORC website, and may also be available on the Chelsea town website.

Sydney Steinle to share links via email to the map section on the Two Rivers website.

It was noted that there are no cultural resources listed in this chapter, but the Historical Society would be a potential addition. Adding such a section would likely impact the timeline for overall Plan approval.

Decision Summary: It was decided in the interest of time to defer the idea of adding a section on the Historical Society until after this Plan approval cycle.

Agriculture and Forestry Chapter

Justin Sauerwein noted that many of the points noted as trends within this chapter are either incomplete or possibly outdated. It was debated whether the inclusion of updated trends in general added value to the document, or just created an increased likelihood that the document would become outdated sooner.

Decision Summary: For this chapter, the currently listed trends will be removed and no updated trends will be added.

Finalizing Reviews and Edits

Clean versions of the Plan will need to be distributed to other stakeholders as required by statute, such as the Chelsea Selectboard, adjacent town representatives, etc. Sydney Steinle can compile comments and changes for the rest of the document from Planning Commission members, as long as she receives feedback by 2023 August 07. She provided an example of the format that will be easiest for her to review and reconcile.

- Sydney Steinle** to clean up tracked changes to remove minor edits like punctuation, and will distribute that to the Planning Commission members.
- Sydney Steinle** to send a completely clean version of the Plan to the Selectboard and adjacent town representatives.
- Planning Commission members** to send any edits to Sydney by 2023 August 07, so that she can compile the compile the list of comments and changes.

Next Meeting

Decision Summary: The next Planning Commission meeting will be on August 10 (Thursday) at 7:00pm in the Town Hall.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00pm.