

Shaftsbury Planning Commission

October 23, 2018

- 1) The meeting came to order at 7:03 p.m. Present were commissioners Chris Williams (chair), Mike Foley, and Naomi Miller. Mike Cichanowski arrived at 7:15 p.m. Also present was Select Board chair Tim Scoggins and zoning administrator Shelly Stiles.
- 2) Ms. Miller moved to approve the 10/9/18 minutes. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.
- 3) Mr. Williams introduced Michael Batchner of the Bennington County Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Batchner will be assisting the PC in creating the revised Plan. He similarly recently helped the towns of Arlington and Pownal. He suggested the PC use the BCRC guidance document to help ensure that all the items required by the state are incorporated in the new Plan. The Plan doesn't have to meet those requirements, but if it doesn't the Town will no longer be eligible for grants from Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Mr. Batchner will create the maps for the Plan. Re cell service and broadband mapping, he suggested commissioners ask first responders where there is or is service. Mr. Scoggins said cell zones change frequently. Whether to include such a map was not decided. If needed, the ZA will research for it.

Bill Christian and Linn Sternberg, from the audience, asked that the Plan include information on how the Town can meet the state's energy goals. As an example, it could urge energy audits and updates on Town buildings. Ms. Sternberg asked that an energy committee be appointed. Mr. Scoggins said the Select Board would be interested in doing so, especially if a group of active citizens stood ready to work on it.

Mr. Williams mentioned a section on climate change. Mr. Batchner said he has some Vermont- and NE-specific data. He suggested the Plan address adapting to climate change. It could indicate where, for example, vulnerable elderly could find respite during hot spells. Ms. Miller said there could be two approaches: what actions to take to slow climate change, and what actions to take to adapt to it. Latter actions might not strike people as controversial in the same way actions regarding the former might be seen. Mr. Foley mentioned forest fragmentation and tick population increases. Mr. Williams said Chapter 5 is too long already. Mr. Batchner asked if the commission had decided upon a format for the chapters, other than using the example of the Brattleboro plan in which goals and actions are placed at the start of each chapter.

- 4) Commissioners reported on their conversations with community leaders: Andrew Knafel, Tom Paquin, the school board and school principal. Ms. Miller noted that Pullman Farm practices carbon-neutral farming. She said she'd left several messages with Mr. Mattison and MR. Vsdakin. Mr. Williams reported on his conversation with Jim McGinnis, the water board superintendent. He said the system has about 1 million to 1.5 million gallons of reserve capacity, enough for about fifty additional hook-ups. None have been added in the last five years. The replacement of the asbestos/concrete water mains was discussed. The Highway Department will

become the Public Works Department, which will include roads, water and parks. Otter Creek Engineering has guided the system for many years. Mr. Williams will talk with Trevor Mance.

- 5) The Commission turned to Chapter 15. It was agreed it probably isn't necessary. The one or two important paragraphs can be incorporated elsewhere.

Mr. Foley said a map of cell and broadband service areas wasn't worth the effort required to create it. Individuals and families are already figuring out who to turn to.

Mr. Williams suggested the economic chapter needs beefing up. He said the Town is essentially treading water. Ms. Miller said that is true of many rural parts of the country. Mr. Miller suggested comparing the economic conditions in Shaftsbury with other similar communities in the Northeast. Is the town an outlier?

The Town plan is essentially a to-do list for the Select Board.

The group had a short discussion about what kinds of changes the Town can effect. Mr. Cichanowski said almost no one has come to the Commission asking for help from the Town.

- 6) The housing paragraphs in chapter 3 will be moved to the housing chapter.

Who will rewrite what?

- Chapter 3: Mr. Foley
- Chapter 4: no significant changes necessary. (It's "history!")
- Chapter 5: Ms. Miller
- Chapter 6 and 7: no takers
- Chapters 8,9,10: Mr. Cichanowski
- Chapter 11: Ms. Miller
- Chapter 12 and 13: Mr. Williams
- Chapter 14: no takers
- Chapter 15: incorporate elsewhere

To do: attempt to write and distribute the new work in time to prepare for the November 27 meeting.

Note: a hearing on the proposed bylaw changes will be held on November 13. Mr. Cichanowski moved to proposed that 0.4 Table of Uses be deleted in its entirety. Mr. Foley seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 9:30 p.m.

Notes by ZA Stiles