

Planning Commission Meeting February 4, 2016 7:00 PM - Minutes - Draft

In Attendance Planning Commission Gary Gulka, Frank Kampf, Dawn Andrews

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) – Eric Vorwald, Bonnie Waninger Dan Currier

Members of the public – Dieter Scholz, Bruce Wescott

1. Review agenda
2. Public Comment

Bruce Wescott came to express support for the Planning Commission and the revised zoning regulations wanting to thank the Commission for the time it took to revise the regulations. Bruce understands the complexity of information that needs to be included. Bruce will be commenting publicly as to why the regulations need to be updated.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes

Minutes approved as revised, vote 3-0

4. Planning Commission 2016 Work Plan CVRPC will be here to discuss schedule:

- a. Hazard Mitigation Planning - CVRPC

Dan Currier from CVRPC will be working with Ashley Andrews (CVRPC) to revise the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). The initial meeting will be February 11, 4-6:00 PM and a second meeting will be held March 10, 4-6:00 PM. A wide variety of people have been invited to provide a regional perspective of needs. Revised Hazard Mitigation Plans should reflect States HMP and also cross reference with the town plan. Timeline would be for a draft to be presented to the board in April/May for review.

- b. Town Plan review - CVRPC

Eric Vorwald has reviewed our current town plan and provided a sheet with his comments. (attached) The format and main body of the plan does not require a great deal of work. The plan goals will need to be reviewed and updated. CVRPC will provide guidance on the flood resiliency component, a new requirement, and assistance with identifying and expressing the importance of scenic and historic resources. The economic section, written prior to statutory requirement will also need to be updated. A change in guidance is that policies are to be incorporated Gary asked for an example. Eric will provide samples. Gary asked for guidance on making the document smaller, Eric suggested many towns have two documents a "policy" document which includes a brief summary and project goals and the supporting documentation which is in a separate document.

5. Telecommunications Facilities ordinance
Copies of a draft telecommunications facility ordinance were distributed. The Commission at the next meeting.
6. Possible formation of energy committee
It was determined that currently an energy committee would be supported if a private group wished to pursue this. Further discussion of this when the energy section of the town plan is discussed.
7. VTel application PSB hearing
8. Testimony on the VTel application was completed on February 4. The next step will be the filing of briefs later in the month prior to a decision by the Public Service Board.
9. Other Business
A discussion on if the Commission should send out a mailing like a postcard. Gary brought sample text that was discussed. The reaction was in favor of a mailing.
10. Next meeting date March 3rd 2016

Submitted by Karen Deasy



TO: Town of Cabot Planning Commission

FROM: Eric Vorwald, AICP, Senior Planner

DATE: February 3, 2016

RE: **2016 Municipal Consultation for the Town of Cabot**

The following information is provided as a summary of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's (CVRPC) evaluation of the 2012 Cabot Town Plan. This review has been done as part of a contractual agreement between the CVRPC and the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) to ensure that municipalities with a plan that will be expiring in 18-24 months are made aware of any new requirements for municipal plans and also to receive an analysis of the existing plan. The consultation also affords the Town of Cabot to have a discussion with the CVRPC regarding any planning goals or projects that the CVRPC can provide assistance. Areas of discussion during this consultation will include:

- The Cabot Town Plan including an analysis of the 2012 plan and things to consider for the update
- Any training needs that may be of interest
- Services provided by the CVRPC
- Other items of interest to the Planning Commission

In preparation for this consultation, the CVRPC reviewed the 2012 Cabot Town Plan to identify any areas where it might not meet current statute. Since the plan was approved in 2012, several changes have occurred to statute therefore most town plans throughout the State of Vermont are not currently compliant. Additionally, the CVRPC noted specific areas where additional information or discussion could strengthen the plan as well as sections of the plan that are strong and should be carried forward to the next plan update. The summary attached with this memo outlines the specific areas where the Cabot Town Plan is strong, where it could be strengthened, or new information that will be required for the next plan update.

Consultation Report

MUNICIPALITY: Cabot		DATE OF MEETING: February 4, 2016
I. LOCAL PLANNING NEEDS		
a.	Municipal plan assessment and associated recommendations	<p><i>Please see attached plan review sheet for specific comments related to the assessment of the 2012 Cabot Town Plan.</i></p> <p>Overall, the 2012 Cabot Town Plan serves a solid basis for continued planning within the municipality. The goals and implementation strategies are reasonable and achievable. Updates to statute now require an element related to flood resiliency within the municipal plan (24 V.S.A. §4382(12)(a)).</p>
b.	training needs	<i>To be completed following the Planning Commission meeting</i>
II. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION		
a.	Local permitting process	Currently the Town of Cabot operates under a Board of Adjustment system, however a proposal to transition to a Development Review Board will be before the Town on Town Meeting Day as part of an update to the zoning bylaws.
b.	Non-regulatory priorities	<p>Village Center designation in 2014 will help the Town of Cabot leverage resources available to implement their plan.</p> <p>Implementation schedule included with each section provides a strong basis for priorities to implement the plan.</p>
III. HOW CAN WE HELP?		
a.	RPC programs and projects and local priorities	<p>An information sheet has been provided that outlines the programs and services offered by the CVRPC.</p> <p>Assistance with the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is on-going</p>
b.	RPC Board representation	Dick Payne serves an active role with the current Commission to represent to the Town of Cabot.

Municipal Plan Review – Town of Cabot Date of Current Plan Adoption: 2012

TOWN PLAN CONTEXT

The 2012 Cabot Town Plan outlines a concerted effort by the municipality to promote and preserve its rural character while encouraging growth to occur within its villages. This is evidenced through the goals and implementation strategies that are identified within each section of the plan and outline a path by which to achieve these goals and measure their success. One specific accomplishment was the designation of Cabot as a Village Center in January of 2014.

MAJOR FINDINGS: The following points provide an outline of the plan's effectiveness in addressing statewide planning goals and identifies areas where improvements can be made.

Strengths – Which parts of the plan are particularly effective in implementing the statewide goals?

- The **future land use map** provides an effective representation of the overall tenants of the text in the plan. It highlights the need to protect agricultural areas and focuses development in the villages.
- Each section of the plan includes a clear, concise, and understandable table of **goals and implantation strategies** that includes specific goals, implementation strategies, key implementer(s), and measures of progress. This provides an integral mechanism for identifying and measuring the desired outcomes.
- The **land use** section provides a strong basis and desire for utilizing smart growth principles as identified in the text
- Identifying that future allocation of **wastewater capacity** is important indicates the Town of Cabot has acknowledged the need to prioritize the community's valuable facilities, utilities, and services.
- While challenges are noted, the plan expresses the need and desire to incorporate additional **transportation options** including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit accessibility to the village area.
- The plan specifically recognizes and identifies the importance of how s strong and vibrant village can strengthen the **economy** and economic interests of the community by limiting the need to expand infrastructure throughout the community.

Weaknesses – In which areas can the plan more effectively advance those statewide goals?

- The chapter related to **economy** has limited discussion on commuting patterns and whether or not the Town of Cabot is recognized as an employment center.
- **Adult education** is discussed in the plan however there are no goals to encourage, support, or provide incentives for educational opportunities.

- Additional information should be included to **historic** and **natural features** to define what “significant”, “outstanding”, and “important” mean to the community.
- Limited discussion is noted regarding **mineral extraction** (or lack thereof) in the community and should be expanded to note potential impacts on the community if they exist.
- **Air quality** is discussed however measures to improve air quality are not identified in the plan.
- Additional discussion should be included related to the specific **impacts of agriculture/silviculture** on the natural environment. This could be related in terms of how accepted or required practices impact the community.

Opportunities – What specific opportunities exist to improve the town plan so that it more effectively addresses the statewide goals?

- Expand the discussion of needs for **elderly housing** including accessory dwellings, long-term care facilities, or options for ageing in place.
- A discussion of **flood resiliency** will be required and should address vulnerabilities and how to mitigate those vulnerabilities within the community.
- **Renewable energy** siting should be discussed in terms of where it is encouraged or discouraged throughout the community.
- Additional maps that identify existing infrastructure for recreational opportunities and future connections or needs would show the importance of recreation to the community.
- Identifying and mapping **future infrastructure needs** such as wastewater allocations may help support community goals for focusing development in the villages.
- A report of accomplishments or similar product that notes what **implementation strategies** were completed, are still in progress, or were not successful would show how the community has progressed since the 2012 plan.
- Including a column for funding sources and/or amounts in the implementation tables may help focus the priorities of the community and build the basis for annually updating a capital improvements plan.