

MINUTES
MAIDSTONE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, November 12, 2024, 6:00 pm
Hybrid Meeting, both in person at Town Hall and by Zoom Video

Members present in person: Bruce Barker

Members present via Zoom: Bob Champagne-Willis, Paul Kamins, Raymond Lovell (arrived late)

Also present via Zoom: Amy Pear, Kyle Dwyer of Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA), Ed Tully, “Essex County Resident (not identified)”

Bruce Barker called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm.

APPROVE MINUTES:

Bob made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 3, 2024 meeting. Paul seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

NVDA UPDATE:

Kyle has created a google doc so that we can track the progress on the required elements with hyperlinks to prepared documents. As he prepares parts of the Town Plan, with two sections per future meetings, he will update the google doc. Bob reminded the group that any documents that are produced must be made available to the public. Kyle will provide any documents for the website.

REQUIRED ELEMENT: ENERGY (BOB)

Bob reviewed updated energy reports from Efficiency Vermont. He also reviewed the energy goals from prior Town Plans. The last two Town Plans emphasized the need for the town to educate homeowners about services offered by Efficiency Vermont. Through the efforts of Town Clerk Amy Pear, we will have an energy workshop in just over a week at Town Hall open to the public. Any expenses will be covered by the MERP mini-grant.

REQUIRED ELEMENT: FLOOD RESILIENCE (PAUL)

Paul shared his screen. If there is a major disaster event, the federal government will cover 75% of the costs and the state will cover an additional 7.5%. If we adopt more programs, the state will cover a larger percent. The town has already adopted a local emergency management plan (LEMP), reviewed annually and local hazard mitigation plan (LHMP) which has to be updated every five years. Maidstone does not participate in the Flood Plan, which limits any extra funding covered in the event of a disaster. Surrounding towns have joined the National Flood Insurance Plan (NFIP), but Maidstone does not participate. To participate in the program, we need Flood Hazard Regulations. If Maidstone adopts the NFIP, then individual homeowners who are required to have flood insurance can purchase coverage through the federal program as opposed to the private market, which can be costly.

REQUIRED ELEMENT: GOALS (GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT) (BRUCE)

Bruce shared his screen. He reviewed goals from prior Town Plans, starting with the flood resilience goals and working through the goals of each element. He showed the goals from the last Town Plan and the related survey results. His document with links will be posted on the website.

(Raymond joined the meeting during Bruce's presentation.)

During this conversation, Paul asked about what the end product will look like. Bob stressed that he would like the new Town Plan to be organized around the required elements, so that the next group to look at the Town Plan would be able to update the plan more easily.

REQUIRED ELEMENT: UTILITY AND FACILITY PLAN (RAYMOND)

Raymond spoke with someone from the power company and had them call town hall. Amy spoke with that someone who asked a few questions about the town then was supposed to connect with Raymond again. That did not happen. Ray's opinion is that the power line to the lake is more than adequate to cover the lake region.

OTHER CONVERSATION:

Paul asked if Town Hall was in the floodplain and did the building have to have flood insurance. Amy explained our insurance through VLCT called PACIF. Bob stated that we were not required to have flood insurance. Raymond felt that only two properties were close to the floodplain and had never flooded even though other areas had flooded. Bob reminded the group that the reason for the town to join the NFIP was for higher levels of reimbursement in the event of a natural disaster.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR NEXT MEETING:

We will work on sections of the Town Plan as Kyle updates the google docs.

NEXT MEETING:

Due to Bob having scheduling conflicts in December, we set the next meeting for Thursday, December 5 at 7 pm.

There was no other business.

Bob made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 pm. Raymond seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Champagne-Willis