

MINUTES
MAIDSTONE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Thursday, January 9, 2025, 7:00 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

Also present via Zoom: Amy Pear, Kyle Dwyer of Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA).

Bruce Barker called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

APPROVE MINUTES:

Bob made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2024 meeting. Paul seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All in favor.

NVDA UPDATE:

Kyle updated the commission on an item left unresolved at the last meeting. He met with others including Alison Low, and they felt that our bylaws could include language on accessory dwellings being for year-round residents.

LAND USE: We need to update the bylaws to reflect the Home Act. Bob will check on the statistics that 80% of the revenues generated by taxes comes from the Lake District. We do not have any recommended actions in the Land Use section. Kyle did not make any significant changes to the agriculture and forestry language. Kyle would like to include the status of current farms in Maidstone. Raymond shared his opinion on Maidstone farms. Questions were raised by Paul and Raymond about the intent of the Nature Conservancy. Bob objected to the characterization that there were not any farms in Maidstone. He listed properties that have active farming. Paul felt that the survey prioritized farming, so what do we do to encourage it. Raymond suggested tax breaks for farmers. Bob countered that Current Use gives a tax break and that any reduction in taxes for one property would have to be borne by all the other taxpayers in town. Raymond shared his personal negative experiences with Current Use. Amy suggested that we invite farmers to a meeting so that we can hear their opinions. Under forestry, Kyle asked about current logging in the town. Bob did not know of any current logging, but did clarify that private properties enrolled in Current Use have to have a forestry plan.

Raymond raised a question about subdivision from a right-of-way. This conversation is for bylaw review which follows the current discussion about updating the Town Plan.

Kyle asked a few more questions about prior points in the current Town Plan. Further research is needed. Paul questioned whether the bike path on Route 102 should continue to be part of the Town Plan.

ADJACENT COMMUNITIES: Kyle drew from Bruce's work on this subject. We need to address the recommended action item(s) for this section. Paul asked for examples of regional interaction. Bruce liked Kyle's added language on recommended actions.

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, specifically transportation and flood resilience.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING GRANT: We are currently working with a grant which we have not used. Kyle is tracking his hours. We agreed to not pursue another grant at this time. Next year at this time, we may need to apply as we work on zoning by-laws.

TOWN REPORT:

Bob will draft language for the town report. We will include language that we will meet after the selectboard has it's organizational meeting following Annual Meeting. Amy suggested that we include the recurring link for zoom meetings.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 7 pm.

There was no other business.

Bob made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 pm. Paul seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Champagne-Willis