Braintree Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 15, 2024
7:00pm

Braintree Town Office, 932 Vermont Route 12A, Braintree, VT 05060
Virtually: Join Zoom Meeting
https://zoom.us/j/92791782101?pwd=cE85LytjcFdWcnhpMU40K3V0L0N3UT09
Meeting ID: 927 9178 2101 Passcode: 836662

The meeting was called to order at 7:07. Present from the Planning Commission were Paul Kendall, Malcolm FitzPatrick, Jennifer Phipps and Jackson Evans. Nathan Cleveland could not attend. Also present in person was Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) planner, Kyle Katz. Joining remotely was Peder Rude, project management consultant from North Hill Solutions LLC.

Peder Rude addressed the Planning Commission during public comments regarding the Town of Braintree's pending application to the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) "Implementation Grant" program on behalf of the Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation (GMEDC) and the Orange County Parent Child Center (OCPCC). The grant application requires a letter of support from the Planning Commission indicating that the project is in keeping with the goals of the Town Planning. (A letter of support from the town's selectboard, along with a public hearing, is also required for the application.) Peder summarized the project, which involves the renovation of an existing commercial building on Route 66 in Randolph into a 88 slot licensed child care center. The first phase of the project would bring 48 slots online in 2025 with 40 additional slots to open later. The deadline for the application is September 17th (two days before the next regularly scheduled PC meeting). Peder suggested that

DRAFT

a motion of support, adopted under "Additional Business", would satisfy the requirements of the grant as a statement of support from the PC. Paul Kendall noted that he felt that the project was in keeping with the goals of the Town Plan to support child care centers that would serve Braintree residents. (Section 2.3 Child-care generally and Section 2.8 specifically.) The Planning Commission thanked Mr. Rude for his time and committed to taking up a motion under the Additional Business portion of the meeting.

It was noted that there was a typo in the agenda that called for the approval of the "May and June" minutes. It should have said "July" minutes. However, it was also noted that the July minutes did not indicate that the May minutes were approved. For this reason, the May minutes will be included for approval at the September meeting. On a motion from Paul and second from Jennifer Phipps, the minutes from the July meeting were approved.

The meeting was turned over to Kyle Katz to lead the planning commission through a review of the newly updated Neighborhood Residential District Map. Before discussion began, Malcolm FitzPatrick expressed that he did not feel he had had enough opportunity to make suggestions to the Zoning Bylaw Re-Write in a line-by-line manner. He further noted that he felt that the process was not what he had expected and that he felt the most of the changes were coming from Kyle/TRORC without enough input from the Planning Commission. Kyle

explained in general terms the rewriting process he has followed, which was defined at the beginning of his time working with the Planning Commission: Working from the existing bylaw, he updates sections that deal with housing and flood mitigation, bringing them in line with current laws and accepted practice, as per the Town's Bylaw Modernization Act and Flood Hazard Mitigation Grants. These sections are then presented to the Planning Commission for
DRAFT
review and discussion at their subsequent meeting. Paul Kendall noted that he disagreed with Malcolm's statement about not having opportunities to comment. Paul used a recent example of some suggestions that he had sent to Kyle and the planning commission via email and that Kyle had addressed and incorporated into the plan and maps prior to the current meeting. Malcolm asked Kyle to go through the current draft of the town plan and identify things that were added by him that were not required by law. Jackson Evans suggested that this was not the highest and best use of Kyle's limited grant funded time. Paul suggested that once the rewrite process is substantially completed (as early as October), that the Planning Commission review a "cleaned up" new draft along with a draft showing the tracked changes since the beginning of the rewrite process. This would allow for a side-by-side comparison of where we started and how we got to a rewritten draft. Malcolm also reminded the Planning Commission that they needed to still review suggestions made from outside of the Planning Commission (such as those submitted by the Development Review Board). The discussion was then redirected back to a review of the order of the day and the review of the Zoning District Map.

Kyle noted that based on Paul's suggestion, the 500 and 1000 foot buffer surrounding the various zoning districts be made to scale so that property owners and the zoning administrator can more easily determine where their property and project may fall. Kyle asked that the Planning Commission determine the boundaries of West Braintree and South Braintree (see action item 1).

Following the review of the map, Kyle reviewed a document sent to the Planning Commission which provided additional edits to the zoning districts. The new language in this document further clarified the district buffers.

DRAFT

The next item on the agenda was the continued review of Section 4 of the Bylaw Draft beginning where the Planning Commission left off at Section 4.10.6.2. Malcolm FitzPatrick noted that he is uncomfortable with the use of the River Corridor language as it has implications for how rebuilding can occur following flooding events. His concern is that restrictions on rebuilding will force out property owners with limited means. He requested that the Planning Commission consider whether or not to include river corridor language in the updated bylaw.

Under additional business the Planning Commission adopted the following motion: "The Planning Commission supports the Town of Braintree's application to the Vermont Community Development Program's Implementation Grant on behalf of the Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation and Orange County Parent Child Center. The OCPCC's project to develop a child care center in Randolph will benefit Braintree families, provides opportunities to participate in multi-town partnerships and is in keeping with the goals of the Braintree Town Plan." The motion was passed with three votes in favor and one abstention by Malcolm FitzPatrick.

With no additional business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned.
NOTE: Next Regular Meeting: September 19, 2024 at 7:00pm