

DRAFT MINUTES

TOWN OF SUNDERLAND

PLANNING COMMISSION

October 26, 2022, at 6PM

Town Hall

1. Call to order 6:00pm
2. Introductions PC Members Present: Rob Zeif, Chair; Benjamin Travis; David Kiernan
Gordon Dossett; SB Member Dixie Zens
3. Minutes: June 22, 2022 - tabled
4. November Meeting date has been changed to Wednesday November 16th, 6PM, at Town Hall.
5. Zoning Administrator update. Review of recent activity and ongoing issues. Discussion of Hill Farm Restaurant and the issuance of Certificate of Occupancy (CO) and investigation of three projects that appear to be unpermitted. General discussion of next steps if a CO is denied.
6. PC Member Kiernan proposed to change the format of PC and Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZRB) to a Planning Commission (PC) and Development Review Board (DRB) format. The change would increase the responsibilities of the ZRB by removing the requirement of the PC to hold hearings on some items and combining them with the current review responsibilities of the ZRB. This would give each Board a distinctive responsibility, the PC reviewing and developing bylaws, a legislative function, and the DRB holding hearings and issuing judgements, a judicial function. The issue will be discussed with the Selectboard and the ZRB.
7. PC Member Kiernan proposed that the method of approving Town Land Use Bylaws (Zoning Bylaws) be changed. Currently the PC makes recommendations to the Selectboard and the Selectboard votes to approve or deny the changes. The change in approval method, would require that all proposed changes to the Zoning Bylaws be voted on by Australian Ballot at a warned Town Meeting. The proposed method would give residents a chance to vote on bylaws that potentially affect the use of their property. Discussions will continue with PC and Selectboard.
8. Planning Commission members had a general discussion of short-term rental regulations including an overview of a proposed Burlington VT Ordinance. The Commission decided each member should bring suggestions of what they believed are important parts of any regulation to the next meeting.
9. PC Member Kiernan will be liaison to the Select Board.
10. Public Comments
Selectboard member Dixie Zens discussed meetings SB had with planners from the Bennington County Regional Commission regarding the PC proposed Town Center designation. Chairman Zeif of the PC questioned why the PC was not kept informed of these meetings as it was primarily a zoning issue. Mr. Zens agreed to encourage better communication.

Mr. Zens reviewed current ARPA fund proposals. The issue of the church at the corner of Hill Farm and Hill Lane was discussed for funding and inclusion in the Town Center designated area.

Mr. Dossett made the motion "The Planning Commission supports ARPA funding of historic church preservation as part of the Village Center", seconded by Mr. Travis.
Motion passed 4-0-0.

Mr. Zens and Mr. Zeif presented information from the Vermont Council of Rural Development. The VCRD would help the Town survey residents on what direction they would like to see the Town take. This would be at minimal cost to the Town. A representative of the VCRD will attend the November 14 Selectboard meeting at Town Hall.

11. Motion to adjourn at 7:42 by Mr. Dossett, seconded by Mr. Travis. Motion passed 4-0-0