

**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
TOWN PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
APRIL 25, 2016
MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's Town Plan Review Committee was held on Monday, April 25, 2016 in the Conference Room of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission.

Committee Members Present:

George Malek – Town of Orange
Julie Potter – Town of East Montpelier
Paul Rose – Town of Calais

Others Present:

Jan Ohlsson – Town of Calais
Gary Root – Town of Calais
Scott Bassage – Town of Calais
Eric Vorwald, AICP – CVRPC Senior Planner

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Vorwald at 4:07pm. The meeting began with introductions of those present.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Vorwald requested that an item be added whereby the Committee would select a member to present the committee's position at the Regional Planning Commission meeting should the need arise. The Committee members agreed to discuss this at the end of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public were present for comments.

DISCUSSION OF CALAIS TOWN PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Vorwald introduced the purpose of the meeting noting that the Town of Calais had requested regional approval of their town plan that was approved by the Calais Planning Commission and adopted by the Calais Selectboard in 2016. He also noted that the discussion and a recommendation would be forwarded to the full regional commission for their consideration of approval if the plan contained all the required elements noted in statute, was consistent with the state planning goals noted in statute, and is consistent with the regional plan and approved plans of other municipalities. Mr. Vorwald then asked for the representatives of Calais to provide an overview of the plan and the planning process that was conducted.

Ms. Ohlsson began by providing an overview of the Calais Town Plan and the process that went into the development of the plan. She specifically noted that the 2016 update focused more on incorporating an action plan that could be implemented. This was compared to the previous town plan that did not include strong actions items. Ms. Ohlsson also noted that the majority of the Planning Commission was new therefore it was a learning process for everyone.

Ms. Ohlsson continued her overview and noted that there was approximately nine months of discussions and meetings with the Town's Conservation Commission related to specific issues in the town plan update which resulted in many compromises along the way. Ms. Ohlsson also stated that a focus of this plan update was on agriculture and energy with an eye towards sustainability and economic growth. She noted that conservation, economic development, and services were important aspects of this plan update since limited infrastructure and facilities exist in Calais. Finally, Ms. Ohlsson and Mr. Rose both noted that a goal of the plan was to strengthen the Town's standing with Act 250 and increase the level of deference given by the Public Services Board through the Section 248 process.

Mr. Malek noted the comments from staff's review indicating that he felt there was inconsistency with the requirements from statute and how staff interpreted the language in the plan as it related to housing affordability and accessory dwellings. He also noted a similar inconsistency regarding staff's comments on future land use mapping. Ms. Potter continued on this discussion and inquired which map the Town of Calais would identify as their Future Land Use map. Mr. Root referenced a new map that wasn't currently included in the plan but was being developed for a future amendment to the plan. He noted that this new map would more accurately reflect where critical resources were located and where future land uses would be preferred. He also indicated that developing the map was instructive to help narrow down where development can occur.

Next, Ms. Potter asked if the Town of Calais has experienced any development pressure over the past seven or eight years. Ms. Ohlsson and Mr. Root indicated that there has been limited pressure for development with most of the activity coming from subdivisions or accessory buildings. A question was asked regarding the possible "What If" map showing the expansion of a village area against the boundary between the Town of Calais and the Town of East Montpelier. It was noted that this area was no longer being considered for expansion and should be removed from the map.

Ms. Potter asked about the overall structure of the document and how it was organized. Mr. Root explained that the goal was to have a plan with measurable and enforceable action items. There was a lot of information that did not meet this criteria but the town didn't want to lose institutional aspect of the knowledge base. It was decided that a compromise would be to include a supplemental information section to retain this information without compromising the actionable items in the plan.

Mr. Malek asked about the information related to integrating "smart growth principles" in the housing section and noted that this could cause issues due to the interpretation of smart growth principles and their impacts over time. Mr. Rose noted that this statement was primarily included to help strengthen the plan's position for projects that would meet the thresholds in the Act 250 process.

Following this discussion, Ms. Potter made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Malek to recommend approval of the Town of Calais' Town Plan. The motion was passed by a vote of 3 – 0 with no additional

discussion. As a member of the Town Plan Review Committee and representative of the Town of Calais, Mr. Rose asked that the record reflect his vote for approval was based solely on the staff analysis that indicated the Calais Town Plan met the minimum statutory requirements for regional approval.

Following the vote, Mr. Vorwald asked if there was a member of the committee that would be able to speak on behalf of the committee at the commission meeting should the need arise. It was noted that one of the committee members would assume that role if requested during the meeting but no individual was appointed.

ADJOURNMENT

With no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:19pm.

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