

Land Use Regulation Update Committee
Town of Ferrisburgh, Vt.

DRAFT – Minutes for meeting of January 8, 2020.

Members present: Bonnie Barnes, Anne Cohn, Carl Cole, Clark Hinsdale, Arabella Holzapfel, Karen Pettersen, Jean Richardson, Norm Smith.

Visitors present: Eric Blair, Ashley LaFlam, Sean LaFlam, Jessica James.

Call to order: Arabella Holzapfel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Approve minutes: Carl Cole made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting on December 11, 2019. Bonnie Barnes seconded. **Motion approved.**

Follow up on December 11 public forum: Arabella Holzapfel, chair for the Land Use Regulation Update Committee (LURUC), began the meeting by asking committee members what they'd heard at the public forum that needed follow-up, and how that follow-up might look.

Clark Hinsdale said he felt recent developments in Vergennes, which came up during the public forum and are now being discussed by the Ferrisburgh selectboard, should be considered as LURUC continues its work on the zoning bylaws. Jean Richardson wondered if the committee should be looking beyond its charge to rewrite the zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations. Arabella Holzapfel said the committee is hoping to wrap up its work this summer, and wondered whether that would allow the group to commit to a broader focus, suggested by the Vergennes developments.

Bob Beach said the group had been pushing pretty hard, with Holzapfel doing a lot of the work. He felt he understood where Clark Hinsdale was coming from, seeing opportunities in the changes happening in Vergennes. Hinsdale said it would be important for Ferrisburgh to consider those opportunities, which might make it possible for parts of the town to take advantage of the sewer and water infrastructure in Vergennes.

Taking up a point raised at the public forum, he said if Vergennes and Ferrisburgh were working more closely together on infrastructure, it might be possible for Ferrisburgh to embrace Vergennes as something of a town center, rather than trying to recreate that center in Ferrisburgh. That might benefit both the town and the city, he said.

Bonnie Barnes suggested LURUC split its mission into two tracks, if the Planning Commission approved, with one track pursuing public input and looking at broader issues, while a second track focused on the nuts-and-bolts details of completing the zoning bylaws rewrite. Perhaps the group could have one meeting each month on new ideas and public input, she said, and one in which the committee forged ahead on the nitty-gritty details.

Arabella Holzapfel thought the planning grant the town recently received would be able to help with outreach and the big picture issues that were one focus of the previous public forum.

Carl Cole suggested the questions that have been raised about denser development, which the grant is supposed to help the town answer, would not apply to most of the town, but mostly to the town center area in the general vicinity of the town hall. Norm Smith said that's the point of the investigation the grant is supposed to facilitate: Where in the town does denser development make sense? And what would that development look like?

Committee members said there had been substantial improvements made toward a zoning bylaw rewrite, though much work remains.

Bonnie Barnes and Arabella Holzapfel said they would be meeting soon with Addison County Regional Planning Commission staff to discuss further the work that can be facilitated with the planning grant.

Eric Blair, a planner and designer from Cornwall, said he would be interested in sharing his ideas with the town. Bob Beach, a committee member and chair of the Planning Commission, invited Blair to make a presentation to the Planning Commission and other interested parties at the next Planning Commission meeting, scheduled for January 15 at 7 p.m. Blair agreed.

Ashley LaFlam, a Ferrisburgh resident, said the recent debate over closing the Ferrisburgh Central School had made it more urgent to develop strategies for attracting more families, and for promoting smart growth and investment in the town.

Norm Smith, Jean Richardson, Bonnie Barnes and Karen Pettersen agreed to meet on January 28 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. to continue going through the draft of the zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations, cleaning up any remaining inconsistencies and fleshing out the language in some sections. Carl Cole said he would like to be included, to discuss changes to the section on definitions.

Adjournment. Bob Beach made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Carl Cole seconded. All voted in favor. **Motion approved.**

— Respectfully submitted,

Tim Etchells