



**Town of Whitingham
Planning Commission
Wednesday, July 11, 2018 AT 7:00 PM
Minutes**

Present:

Planning Commission: Brad Lackey (Chair), Peter Barus (Clerk), Kristen Breeden, Linda Donaghue, Phil Edelstein

Zoning Administrator: Gig Zboray

Windham Regional Commission: John Bennett

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM.

Additions or Changes to Agenda

Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda)

Discussion of Planning Grant opportunities

Mr. Bennett discussed planning grants that will become available for 2019; notice released at beginning of month. He offered assistance from Windham Regional Commission and recommended the Commission consider advancing flood resilience projects. He noted the undersized bridge at the municipal center having a channel many feet narrower than bankfull width, and two other constricted culverts, which are cited in the River Corridor Plan.

He discussed the Transportation Alternative Programs grant under the heavy stormwater mitigations category; the deadline was the July 13 and requires a 20% match; cost estimates could be over \$200,000.00 which would need Selectboard approval. Other possible grants could be VTRANS Transportation Alternatives Program next cycle; the Town Highway Bridge Program for roadways over the narrow structures. Although the two crossings at the Municipal Center do not appear to be designated town highways, so may not be eligible for VTRANS programs, they could be laid out by the town as highways and become eligible.

Mr. Bennett explained that the FEMA Hazard Mitigation, Pre-disaster Mitigation and Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Programs are funded only after a Presidential Declaration of Disaster, and would be based on a Notice of Funding Opportunity released by FEMA, possibly in January. The Better Connections Grant Program is not awarded if there is a current Municipal Planning Grant in effect.

Mr. Bennett suggested that the PC, working with others from the town, could generate interest in pursuing grants that would upsize the culvert at the intersection of Rt 100 and Rt 112, which is very



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much smaller than necessary according to the River Corridor Plan, which shows that all three culverts should be advanced to mitigate the kind of severe flooding that occurred previously.

There was discussion; there is an ongoing effort to get the 100-112 culvert on the VTRANS priority list. There was discussion of Conway School of Landscape Design (Conway, MA) as a possible resource, but probably not for engineering flood mitigation; it was noted that the Selectboard is fully occupied with the sewage plant.

Mr. Bennett discussed the Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program (Environmental Conservation Dept), that it may not be willing to fund Infrastructure Resilience as opposed to Water Quality Improvement; there was discussion of whether the town highway crew could do substantial work in these areas.

There was discussion with reference to flood mitigation maps, about widening the culverts at the Municipal Center and the impact of this on the 100-112 culvert, which may not be addressed for several more years by VTRANS (“not in our lifetime”).

Mr. Bennett suggested that WRC is willing to render assistance and encourage ANR and VTRANS to participate; this would need the active interest of the PC; the two upstream culverts, the Kingsley house, the berm on the tributary stream bank near 100-112 and that culvert should be addressed as recommended in the recently released River Corridor Plan and the upcoming Hazard Mitigation Plan. He noted that the Municipal Planning Grant deadline is October 1 and there is a ten percent local match requirement for all MPGs. He recommended citing these documents in applying for the grants.

Ms. Zboray provided updated copies of the Town Plan for commissioners to review before submitting to the Selectboard for adoption. Mr. Bennett noted that during the work on the Town Plan, the River Corridor plan had not yet been released; that page 39 under Flood Hazard Mitigation now contains language noting the recommendations of that plan, and that grants should be written to address these issues; now that there is a completed River Corridor Plan there should be efforts to convene the ANR and VTRANS and other interested parties from the town to explore general funding sources and the feasibility of finding funding so as to be ready for the next Disaster Declaration, not omitting designation of town highways. It was noted that some of this has been discussed with the Mr. Janovsky.

Ms. Zboray suggested that the PC should decide which projects should be addressed first and estimate costs and grant matching funds for the next budget.

Mr. Bennett explained that the municipal planning grants and infrastructure projects must be addressed separately from water quality projects, noting some of the history. He will inquire as to support for Ecosystem Restoration Grant projects in Jacksonville.



**Town of Whitingham
Planning Commission
Wednesday, July 11, 2018 AT 7:00 PM
Minutes**

There was discussion as to whether action on the upstream culverts might possibly encourage VTRANS to take an interest in 100-112, and first steps:

- Assemble a local group to invite the WRC Transportation Committee and others to request VTRANS action
- Apply for grant funding to do the engineering upstream
- Further discussion will be on the August 8 meeting Agenda
- Information on grants and projects will be distributed to the members.

Mr. Bennett discussed the Agriculture and Forestry definitions information he had distributed per request; there was discussion of permitted use; he had sent examples from surrounding towns.

Zoning Administration

Review of Zoning Regulations edits

There was discussion of 5.13, Rural Residential districts, and Solar arrays (off-grid).

Approve minutes of June 2018

Mr. Lackey moved to approve the minutes for June 7, 2018. Second by Mr. Barus. **All in Favor.**

Chair's report and correspondence

Other Business

Next agenda

- Discuss next steps on Flood Hazard Mitigation and grants

Adjourn

Ms. Donaghue moved to adjourn. Second by Mr. Barus. **All in Favor.**

The meeting Adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Clerk, July 12, 2018