

TOWN OF HIGHGATE
Planning Commission Mtg.
April 17, 2018 @ 6pm

Approved Minutes

NOTE: All actions taken are unanimous unless otherwise stated.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Luc Dupuis, Chair, opened up the meeting @ 5:58pm.

Present for this meeting were:

Planning Commission Board Members; Luc Dupuis – Chair; Thomas Conley – Vice Chair; Bruce Ryan *absent - Barbara Chevalier*

Town of Highgate Staff: Wendi Dusablon – Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk; Heidi Britch-Valenta – Town Administrator / Planner

Public / Other: Linda Eldredge

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Bruce Ryan to accept the minutes from March 20, 2018, as written. The motion was seconded by Tom Conley – **APPROVED.**

III. VILLAGE DESIGNATION APPLICATIONS

Linda Eldredge is a Highgate Springs resident and was present for this discussion. Heidi has both applications (Highgate Springs and Highgate Falls) ready for the board to review and then they will go in front of the Selectboard on Thursday. Information is in the drop box and paper copies are available as well. The area for the Highgate Springs application started out much larger and has been cut down. The purpose of the program is to have a finite area. We could make a case to expand it later. The area includes the little white church, Martins Store, Post Office, Chevalier Drilling, miscellaneous rental units and cottages and three Tyler Place buildings (laundry, housekeeping and staff housing). Bruce pointed out Paul's Auto is next to the store and should be included as well. It is disappointing that the boat launch is not included at this time. It was also noted that the Tyler Place Inn is not included. This program is attractive, because it offers opportunities for tax credits to residential and business owners, as well as gives us a higher ranking for grant applications. There are no down sides that we are aware of. The center of Highgate has been in the program for 5+ years. The application includes a cover letter to be signed by the Planning Commission as well as resolutions from the Selectboard and Regional Planning, maps, photos and justification excerpts from our town plan and zoning bylaws to show that it is in agreement with our goals and visions as a town. The PC was happy with what was presented and Luc signed off on the packet. Linda Eldredge appreciates the information and asked about the timeline. Our application should be reviewed in May. The application for Highgate Falls also included the same information as above with photos and maps of the falls area. The area includes the Highgate Manor, St. Johns church, the town park, cemetery, two properties south at the end of Brosseau Road, up to the canoe portage on the other side of the dam, around the portage trail above the river and over to the parking lot. All of the hydro dam area is included and all the houses on both sides of Route 207 (Highgate Road) from Brosseau Road to the canoe portage area. The boat launch area was excluded. The PC was happy with what was presented and Luc signed off on the packet. We should also hear on this application in May. We are required to attend a hearing in Montpelier and Heidi is looking for volunteers to go.

IV. GRANT & PROJECT UPDATES

There was discussion on projects the PC would like to start working on. The former store (turned apartment building) in East Highgate is now down in preparation for the new bridge on Machia Road. They are working on getting the power lines moved and then there will be archeological testing done prior to construction this summer. The old bridge will remain up during construction. The Selectboard will be making a decision on Thursday on who will be doing the design work for the Machia Road bank stabilization project. Many road projects will be happening this summer using three Better Back Roads grants. One on Mill Hill Road and two on Tarte Road (one at the bridge

area and one at the intersection with Parent Road). The construction at the municipal building for ADA modifications will also be happening this year, and we hope some work on the roof! The bike and pedestrian program will open up this summer with more grant opportunities for the town. Lafayette will be in town on April 23rd to repaint all the crosswalks associated with the sidewalk project. All of them will be redone, including Gore Road. They said the issues with the paint last time was a batch issue. The board would like to see a flashing beacon at the Gore Road crosswalk – this is something grant funding could help with. The next PC meeting on May 15th will focus on putting plans and old studies back to the forefront and explore more possibilities in the future with sidewalks. A study was already done on Route 78 that explored having crosswalk islands at each end of the village area to help slow traffic. There was discussion on the town taking over the section of Route 78 that goes through our village core. This has been discussed before, but not for some time now. We need a committee in place to get back behind this and put together a list of goals.

V. OTHER UPDATES

- The Regional Recreation Initiative will be meeting on May 23rd @ 5:30pm at Highgate Elementary School (cafeteria). This is a collaboration of Franklin and Grand Isle counties. The PC should get involved if any members want to attend. Points this group is considering are 1) what are the current needs? 2) what are the current gaps / barriers? 3) how do we support collaboration? and 4) what are the next steps? This group is working to bring back Mark Fenton, who is a dynamic speaker. He was here previously a few years ago and performed walking audits in several towns.
- Highgate used to have an economic development committee years ago. It is something to consider bringing back. We are applying for funds for a feasibility study to extend water from MVU down to the airport region. Harrison's own the property beside the airport and are interested in developing an industrial park if we can get water over there.
- For the next agenda on May 15th the PC would like to get the discussion going again with the sidewalk committee.
- The PC is invited to the Selectboard meeting on April 19th @ 7pm.

VI. UPCOMING EVENTS

April 19	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
May 3	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
May 5		Green Up Day
May 5	8am – 2pm	Household Hazardous Waste Day Transfer Station Road @ sand shed
May 10	6pm	DRB Mtg.

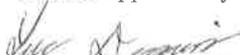
VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Bruce Ryan to adjourn the meeting @ 6:47pm. The motion was seconded by Tom Conley – **APPROVED**.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

 , Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk 5/15/18
Wendi Dusablon Date

Minutes approved by:

 , Planning Comm. – Chair 5/15/18
Luc Dupuis Date