

TOWN OF HIGHGATE
Planning Commission Mtg.
May 19, 2020 @ 6pm

Approved Minutes

NOTE: All actions taken are unanimous unless otherwise stated.

ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3726187919?pwd=MHYwazZrdHQ4eGho%2oakdCWlZMekZHUTog>

Meeting ID: 372 618 7919

Password: 7yatzE

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,3726187919#,,1#,475214# US (Chicago)

+16465588656,,3726187919#,,1#,475214# US (New York)

Dial by your location +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 372 618 7919 Password: 475214

JOIN BY FREE CONFERENCE CALL

DIAL IN NUMBER 425-436-6365 ACCESS CODE 188557

I. CALL TO ORDER

Luc Dupuis opened up the meeting @ 6:13pm. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, changes to open meeting law allowed for this meeting to take place with no declared physical location. Everyone participated from their own location by video or phone.

Planning Commission Board Members; Luc Dupuis; Tom Conley
Ken Thompson; Bruce Ryan *absent – Scott Bessette*

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

Public / Other: None

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Bruce Ryan to approve the minutes from March 17, 2020, as written. The motion was seconded by Ken Thompson – **APPROVED.**

III. REORGANIZATION OF OFFICERS

Tom Conley was reappointed by the Selectboard for a three-year term. Richard Noel stepped down from the PC to allow new members to have an opportunity. Scott Bessette was then appointed by the Selectboard to fill that seat on the PC. It was decided to wait until the June PC meeting to reorganize, when all five members will hopefully be present. Hopefully we will be able to meet in person, but we won't know what is allowed until closer to the June meeting. There was discussion on possibly using the arena facility where we can space our further. Heidi will look into options or we may need to hold another Zoom meeting.

IV. GRANT & PROJECT UPDATES

- Heidi recapped what had been discussed at the last PC meeting, Mar. 17th.
- Bridge 25 (Machia Rd.) project is complete. There is a parking issue with the tenants in the apartment building next door. The landowner has been contacted to speak with the tenants. No parking signs will be posted. We don't have final numbers on the bridge project but Heidi believes we stayed within budget. The Selectboard is working on signage for the dedication to Richard Noel. A dedication ceremony will be planned at a date to be determined.
- There will be an update to the public on the Machia Rd. slope stabilization via Zoom at the Selectboard meeting on May 21st from DeWolfe Engineers. The neighbors have been noticed if they wish to participate by phone or video and the Young's (across from the site) have been sent paper copies and plan to participate on May 21st. We are required to hold three public meetings on this project.
- The Better Back Roads grant for the Rollo Road project is on hold until further notice.
- Still no word on the FEMA grant for the Transfer Station slope stabilization project.
- The Municipal Planning Grant for the evaluation of water and sewer for the Village Core Master Plan is on hold because their meeting had to be postponed due to the COVIC-19 pandemic. The VCMP will need to meet soon in some capacity to keep this on track.
- The Airport Study grant is complete and is being closed out.
- We were awarded a grant from RiseVT for the Community Celebration (if we are allowed to gather).
- We should hear in late May or early June on the Economic Development Planning Funds from USDA.
- Heidi gave an update on the ANR wastewater study.
- We just submitted two grants to AOT: one for a concrete box culvert on Rice Hill Road (\$190,000.00 project / \$175,000.00 grant) and the other is to repave Machia Road in the area of the Young's house.
- Heidi gave an update on the expansion project at the Franklin County Airport. This goes hand in hand with the conversation at the last Selectboard meeting about the Northern Borders grant for the infrastructure at the airport. Heidi shared the numbers for the project, which is a total of \$3.4 million. If we are awarded the Northern Borders funding for \$1 million and other funding we hope to secure, that will leave a match for the town of \$680,000.00. Jim Harrison, the private developer, has committed to cover \$200,000.00 towards our match if the project is a go, leaving us with \$480,000.00 if everything comes through in our favor. The taxpayers will need to vote on the \$480,000.00. The Selectboard approved submitting a letter of support. Motion by Bruce Ryan for the Highgate Planning Commission to also issue a letter of support for the Northern Borders grant. The motion was seconded by Tom Conley – **APPROVED.**

V. **VCRD COMMUNITY VISIT**

Staff from VT Council on Rural Development participated in the Selectboard meeting on 4/16/2020 via Zoom. Heidi recapped the conversation for the Planning Commission. The minutes and Zoom video from April 16th are both available on our website to watch or read the full conversation regarding what VCRD can assist us with. The process will likely start sometime in 2021.

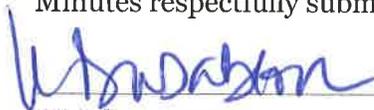
VI. **OTHER BUSINESS**

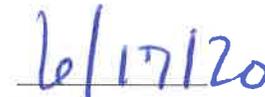
We made the list for the Village Core Master Plan and airport projects with regard to the Agency of Natural Resources planning fund projections. The VCMP project is a good fit and likely to be funded. They also offer up to 50% loan forgiveness if needed. The airport project is not in a village center, growth center or opportunity zone. It would make sense for the PC to look into the airport area more because the State of VT is not in support of sprawl.

VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Bruce Ryan to adjourn the meeting @ 6:46pm. The motion was seconded by Tom Conley – **APPROVED.**

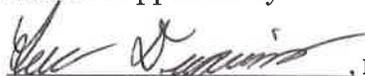
Minutes respectfully submitted by:

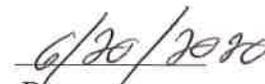

Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk
Wendi Dusablon


Date

Minutes transcribed from Zoom video. I did not participate in this meeting on 5/19/20.

Minutes approved by:


Planning Commission
Luc Dupuis


Date