

Berlin Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes

February 24, 2016

Present: Brandy Saxton, Tom Badowski, Karla Nuisl, Clara Ayer, Sally Herring, and many other interested parties and residents

Next meeting: March 9th 6pm, Berlin Town Office

1. Discussion

• Presentation – Berlin Mall

- Presented by Mike Rushman – consultant for Berlin Mall
 - Property was purchase in 2010
 - Has brought in the only Super Walmart in Vermont
 - 5 other store expansions
 - Food Vendors
 - Now hosing events
 - Kohl's opening
 - Existing Conditions
 - Metro Areas
 - Barre/Montpelier ~ 60,000 people
 - Burlington ~ 220,000 people
 - Lebanon ~ 220,000 people
 - Malls – time of upheaval – more pedestrian friendly, mixed use with activities
 - Competitors
 - Strip Development
 - Down Towns
 - What's Missing?
 - No parks or playgrounds in downtown Barre or Montpelier or along the Barre-Montpelier Road
 - Lack of modern housing at all pricepoints
 - Lack of child oriented uses
 - Berlin Town Center
 - Study done in 2000
 - Town Center zone developed in 2005
 - Vision and Concept developed in 2007
 - Collapse of the Retail Market 2009
 - Purpose of Proposed Project and Town Center
 - Regional Service
 - Mixed Use
 - Infill-Underutilized Parcels
 - Reduced Parking
 - Higher Density Housing

- New Town Center Policy
 - No traditional Town Center existing
 - Grant Priority
 - Existing Settlement
 - Special Taxing
 - Higher Density
 - Proposed Boundaries ~ 125 acres
 - Likely need additional connections (roads)
 - Building Blocks
 - Berlin Mall Road to become a “Main Street”
 - Town Commons
 - Walking and Jogging Trails
 - Public Uses – example post office
 - Services
 - Restaurants
 - Garden Center
 - Child Friendly
 - Examples: playground, gymnastics, clothes, makers space, laundramat, showcase for food and drink, flex space, taproom, produce stand, bakery, brewery, festivals etc.
 - Mall Property
 - Bring Mall tenants signage to the street and add doors
 - 1 acre park by main entrance
 - Event space
 - Garden center
 - Trails
 - Hotel site
 - Retail buildings
 - Residential
 - Mixed Use
 - Implementation – staffing for these steps would be provided to town
 - Pre-application
 - Draft Application
 - Presentation to Down Town Board
 - Conclusion
 - Opportunity for Public-Private Partnership
- **Old Business**
 - Keep checking Brandy’s website for updates (placesense.com/Berlin). Complete 1st draft is up as well as meeting notes, definitions, comments etc.
 - You can also sign up to get an email notification when there are updates
- **Zoning Map**
 - Mixed Use on Junction Road – extend to Montpelier line
 - Industrial/Mixed Use on Dog River Road – leave and check with Brian
 - Hamlet – make the back side to Pennamins Industrial – keep Hamlet along the river
 - Exit 6 – leave Rural

- Commercial – Partridge Farm – bring Commercial up to meet Residential line.
- Rural – have we discussed the density issues any further? Need to do a study on new regulations versus existing
- **Combined Table and Uses**- all the uses listed showing the differences between the different zones
- **Part 1 and 2** – unresolved issues handed out
- **Consolidated Comments** – these have all been posted to website
- **Comments from Guests:**
 - Ellery Packard
 - Mobile Home – joint open space requirement is a bad idea
 - Conformance – please specify exemptions
- **Reminder: MEETINGS WILL BEGIN AT 6PM**
 - This is in order to stay on our existing timeline
 - Meetings are the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month
 - Participation is encouraged!

2. Meeting Adjourned