

Berlin, VT
Planning Commission Meeting
June 10, 2020
7:00 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

Planning Commissioner Members Present: Karla Nuisl (KN), Polly McMurtry (PM), David Huber (DH), Jacob Coakwell (JC)

Absent: Jared Felch (JF)

Others: Brandy Saxton (BS), Paul Simon (PS), and Thomas Badowski (TB).

7:00 PM Call to Order by Chair Nuisl

Approval of Minutes

PM moved and DH second a Motion to approve the Minutes of May 13, 2020, as written. With a roll-call vote, Motion passed unanimously.

Berlin Town Center (BTC) – Virtual Workshop Review

BS shared the results of the 38 visitors to the BTC Virtual Workshop at <https://placesense.com/berlin/>. As many of these visitors did not fully complete the “tour” of the Workshop, results were less than expected. After a brief discussion, Commission decided to keep the Workshop open indefinitely, ask BS to reach out to those who have visited but not completed the tour to do so and continue the promotion of it.

Revisiting BTC Boundary

BS/PS distributed in advance a Memo addressing the reasoning behind a revision to BTC boundary. This revision is a reduction from 125 acres to 100 acres, more rectangular in shape, centered on Berlin Mall Road and encompassing more of the CVMC Campus. This configuration eliminates much of the wetlands which are viewed as significant hurdles to development. This revised boundary moves the Berlin Elementary School and other parcels fronting Paine Turnpike North, out of BTC. The pros and cons of this revised boundary were discussed at length with the consensus being to move forward with the revised boundary.

Concept Plan

PS distributed in advance plan sheets of a conceptual plan (CP) for BTC taking into account the revised BTC boundary. The CP had little infill into the current Berlin Mall parking lot which was contrary to the Commission’s vision. PS stated that Berlin Mall lease agreements with Walmart, JC Penney and Kohl’s greatly restrict the use of those lots. Commission was disappointed and wants further discussions with Mall owners on this point.

CP discussion continued with BS/PS walking through the project that includes a mix of residential, commercial and municipal buildings. CP includes a bike path, Community Green, stage, pedestrian plaza, protected greenspaces, and creation of “Center Street”. General consensus was positive.

BS stated that the CP needs CVMC input, discussion of municipal investment, review of funding options, and a discussion with Act 250. A discussion was had. KN thanked BS/PS for their efforts.

Round Table

PM asked when AARP Grant award will be known. TB speculated late June 2020.

Next Meeting

June 24, 2020

Adjourn Chair KN adjourned at 8:47 PM