

**HYDE PARK
TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
July 8, 2019**

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Members Present: Bob Malbon, Zac Cota and Eric Williams
Members Absent: Brian Jones, Vicki Emerson
Staff: Ron Rodjenski, Town Administrator
Guests: Monica Heath; Jim Heath; Liz Courtney; Town Tree Warden Bob Whalen; Aaron McGee – resident from VT100 in NHP; GMAVT did not videotape this meeting.

Bob Malbon called the meeting to order at 5:32 P.M.

- 1) **Welcome**, agenda changes – no changes to the agenda.
- 2) **Public Comment – Historic Sites Committee** - Jim reported that one bid for the roof is in and the deed to the Valley Grange Hall parcel should be resolved by the end of this week. Sgt. Watson from the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department met with the committee to review options for reducing speeds on VT100 during community events; i.e. contracted deputy, signs or cones, etc. Bob reported that he had a brief discussion with Sen. Westman regarding speed reduction on state highways and as plans for North Hyde Park are developed and activities begin, it would be good to discuss options with him. Monica reported that the Sheriff does patrol but even when they are fully staffed, only one patrol officer is on duty for the three towns (Wolcott, Johnson & Hyde Park contract for 24/7 police patrol services). Bob Whalen stated that the Sheriff does respond to requests for directed patrols. Zac asked if the Selectboard could ask for more directed patrols in NHP and Ron noted that residents can call as well. Zac noted that the new radar speed limit is working on Depot St and Church St. Zac suggested that altering the streetscape would help with traffic control and Jim agreed, noting it could encourage private investment as well. Aaron noted that he had friends on the southside of NHP Village near VT100C that could not walk safely to the post office area on the north end. Jim advised that with the new Guard facility, new activity being planned at the Grange and some new businesses in the area, it might be time to push for streetscape improvements. Zac noted that the Selectboard also needs to hear about these possibilities and other needs in North Hyde Park for the Grange and community events, maybe making the "Historic Sites" committee a more formal revitalization citizen group. Eric Williams said that the group could ask to do a small improvement project near 100C on the Town's vacant lot near Demar to get things moving. Liz suggested a small path could be created to better connect the parcels along VT100. Liz agreed that it might be getting close to examine the committee's purpose and possibly add "NHP revitalization efforts". Jim noted that the committee did recently meet with Preservation Trust of Vermont to look at available grants at the Grange and there is growing citizen energy in NHP. The Commission thanked the group for their time and interest.
- 3) **Northern Border Regional Commission** – Bob M. reported that the letter of intent seeking permission to submit a grant application for a decentralized wastewater system to serve NHP was not accepted by the NBRC.
- 4) **Creation of Hyde Park Conservation Commission ("HPCC")** – Zac Cota explained that a town Conservation Commission could be tasked with managing town-owned properties like the VT100 vacant just north of VT100C (the former Gamble parcel), including invasive species control. Eric suggested that anything positive in North Hyde Park would be great, like a public path to the Gihon River for fishing. Zac reported the HPCC structure would be 5-7 members responsible for town-maintained land and improvements; some empowering authority from the Town to spend funds and a small budget for

conservation activities of \$5,000 or so to maintain town properties and public education events; developing and implementing invasive species control plans to benefit public lands; serve as a town liaison with other town/regional conservation groups; and watch for grant opportunities for the town to pursue. Bob W. advised that special projects, such as on invasive plants and insects, could be sponsored with other groups and town officials like the Tree Warden and assist with organizing speakers. Bob M. noted that developing public access to the rivers and trail development could be a special project. Eric stated that he didn't want to see another layer of government to be a hinderance to development projects. Zac stated that he would like to see thoughtful development, not what Morrisville has done and continues to do, and he will bring in some bullets for the PC review in September (as there is no August meeting).

Brian Jones appeared at this point at 6:30 p.m. Eric asked Zac why he sees Morrisville as sprawl. Zac explained that Morrisville chose to build over large acres compared to denser smarter ways to add more businesses and residential opportunities. Zac noted that he did not want to see Hyde Park be like Morrisville. Eric noted that taxes and regulations make it very undesirable to invest in land and many people he speaks to are moving out. Bob M. noted that he moved here to get away from sprawl and traffic congestion that had developed along the Maine coast, now with continuous roadside development along the coast. Eric wanted to make sure that a conservation commission did not reduce the land development potential for landowners. The Commission talked about current use program details and the new state rules, Vermont having a majority of service industry jobs compared to manufacturing jobs, the high cost of new construction with most of the new housing development happening in either Morrisville or Chittenden County, and the high cost of living requires some to work two jobs to afford to get by.

5) **Minutes:** 05/13/2019 deferred.

Respectfully submitted by Ron Rodjenski