

Worcester Planning Commission

MINUTES

Feb 3, 2022, 5:30pm via ZOOM

Attending: Bill Arrand, Phoenix Mitchell, Kate Spring, Will Baker, Toni Kaeding

Guests: Chani Waterhouse

Housekeeping

- Toni called the meeting to order at 5:32pm.
- Motions to accept minutes of 1.20.22 were duly made, and accepted unanimously.

Proposed Cell Tower Alignment with Town Plan

Group engaged in wide ranging discussion about Planning Commission response to proposed cell tower on Norton Road, including the possible benefits of adding a human health amendment to the Plan, reducing aesthetic impact with multiple shorter towers, and how to reduce negative impact on closest neighbor. Phoenix stressed the need to include consideration of citizens who want cell service in our deliberation. Group agreed and vowed to add more assertive language to the Plan at some future point.

Toni reported that representatives from Vermonters for a Clean Environment advised that the language in the Plan around protection for ridgelines and viewsheds and historic value was “aspirational” and strongly advised a more “regulatory” tone to receive deference from the Public Utility Commission. Group discussed how an “aspirational” approach was suitable to a Town Plan and how Town Ordinances were considered regulatory. Toni reported that Worcester’s attorney agreed with the need for more directive language. Toni added that CVRPC had been consulted during the writing process and made no mention of the case law decisions that forced Town Plans into serving as a regulatory tools for the Towns. Proposed clarifying language was reviewed and confirmed that it included no actual change of content, just better represented original intent of citizens as expressed in Town Ordinance. The proposed clarifying language was unanimously accepted as amendments to the Town Plan. **ACTION:** Toni will initiate the process of amending the Worcester Town Plan per group consensus.

Bill announced that Industrial was presenting their cell tower proposal to the CVRPC Project Review Committee on Feb 10 at 4pm. Bill and Toni intend to attend. **ACTION:** Toni to send ZOOM info to members of Planning Commission.

Matters Arising

Will suggested discussion of Village Center Designation at next meeting.

Adjourn

Bill moved to adjourn, Will seconded, unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 7:03pm.

Next meeting Thur, Feb 17, 2022 at 5:30pm via ZOOM

Toni Kaeding
Worcester Planning Commission