

Town of Bristol
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, November 19, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Fred Baser, Kevin Hanson, Chanin Hill, Melissa Hernandez, John Moyers, Slim Pickens, Bill Sayre

Staff Present: AZ Larsen, Zoning and Planning Administrator

Others Present: Jim Quaglino

Call to Order: Kevin Hanson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held in person and via ZOOM.

I. Review agenda for additions, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 V.S.A. 18 §312(d)(3)(A) and implicit approval

No changes were made to the agenda.

II. Public Comment

Nobody requested time to address the PC.

III. Old Business

Discussion: Update of Middlebury College PS student work.

Kevin reported that Jessica has been in contact with her students, and about ten of them are interested in working on the project outlined at the October meeting. AZ indicated that a tentative initial meeting date of January 7 will provide an opportunity for them to review the three aspects of the project with the interested students.

IV. New Business

Discussion: Affordability and Rentals.

There was a discussion held, prompted by a VPR article circulated by Kevin earlier in the year, regarding the affordability of rentals, both short-term (STR) and long-term (LTR), in Bristol. Point raised included:

- Determining what to use as a definition of affordability – 30% of income, a percentage of median income, or other measures
- The need for public input on the topic
- Strategies for reducing costs and increasing supply
 - Easing of regulations, affordability bonuses, public support
 - Septic constraints
 - Incentivization of senior housing
- Tiny homes – pros and cons
- Supplemental income provided by STRs
- Allowances for ADUs, duplexes
- Impacts on Bristol of STRs
 - Provide housing for temporary needs – life transitions, academics, traveling nurses, etc.
 - Data needed re number of rental units, percentage that are affordable
 - Only sample data is available is available, due to privacy
 - Median income and related info is available through RPC, Census, etc.

Discussion: ZA Administrator Processes.

AZ outlined some of the concerns they have encountered in working with applicants and residents, including:

- The posting of the red 'P' permit notice has been expressed by some as not providing adequate notification of permit issuance
- A lack of clarity regarding building footprints in the UDR, as well as whether any roof overhang must be outside the setback areas
- A prior approval of reconstruction of a building which was demolished sixty years ago, even though the replacement resulted in a non-conforming structure
- How to approach permitting, if allowed, of tiny homes on wheels

AZ also suggested that the UDR allow for some finite administrative amendment possibilities for subdivisions/conditional uses approved by the DRB, and provided example language from other towns. Finally, they indicated that an adjustment to the zoning fee schedule should take place.

PC members thanked AZ for this feedback, and advised them to maintain a list of these matters so that they may be addressed. It was noted that the fee schedule is in the purview of the Selectboard.

It was confirmed that an accessory structure in the Commercial District requires Site Plan Review.

V. Administrative Matters

Acceptance of Minutes

The minutes of October 15, 2024 were approved.

Discussion: Town approval of UDR

The UDR amendments have been approved by Town vote, and AZ will be working on finalization steps with the RPC.

Discussion: Update from Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Steering Committee

Chanin reported that this is still a work in progress, and no recent meetings have taken place.

Discussion: Planning and Zoning Administrator Update

AZ reviewed some recent permitting information.

Discussion: Misc Correspondence

Kevin pointed to some correspondence included in his meeting notes, and also reported that Anna Daylor has resigned from her PC position.

VI. Public Comment

Jim Quaglino offered his appreciation for the work of both the PC and AZ.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary