

**Town of Vershire Planning Commission Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 14, 2022 at 7:00pm at Vershire Town Center building.  
There will be a remote option for this meeting via Zoom or by phone.**

**Attendance:** Gregory Wilson-chair, Eleanor Zue-vice chair, Justin Will, Bob Perkins, Nate Thames, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, David Hooke, Vern Stone, Ken Bushey, and Gene Craft.

**Call to Order:** G. Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

**Agenda Review & Modifications:**Add a report on noise ordinances in other towns.

**Public & Staff Comments:** None at this time.

**Approval of Last Meeting Draft Minutes:** G. Wilson moved to approve the minutes of August 10, 2022 as written. E. Zue seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

Sound Ordinance: E. Zue reported on some research she conducted on the language and enforcement mechanisms of sound ordinances in Vermont towns. She summarized Putney's adopted one in 1997, as a robust example of a [Noise Ordinance](#) . It has standards, notes noises considered exempt, and noises the town wishes to limit. Enforcement includes issuing NOVs and if the violation doesn't stop, imposing daily fines. She will contact the town manager and ask how effectively it has been used. Some questions were asked: does Vershire need one, does Putney's ordinance have time frames when certain noises are allowed/prohibited, and there was reference to Vermont law that is very vague on the issue of how noise might impede a citizen's rights to happiness and safety

Village Designation: G. Wilson thanked Reva Seybolt, Debra Kingsbury, and Sarah Wright (TRORC) for their work on putting together and submitting the Village Designation application for Vershire.

Development Administrator: G. Wilson congratulated Aaron Hoopes on becoming Vershire's new Development Administrator.

**New Business:**

Planning for Vershire's Future: The Planning Commission, members of the Selectboard, and the chair of the Energy Committee participated in the following discussion.

G. Wilson initiated this first conversation for the purpose of getting some initial input on a Planning Commission process for revising the Town Plan. The plan has a life-span of 8-years and is due to be renewed/revised in 2025. G. Craft noted that there are no restrictions on revising a town plan prior to the 8-year deadline if conditions warrant. G. Wilson noted that this is a big project and that TRORC is willing to serve Vershire's PC in an advisory capacity, both to help Vershire develop a process for gathering input and when making actual revisions to the

Plan itself. In order for a Town Plan to be adopted, it must be in sync with the regional plan and TRORC advisors will be key to making sure this is the case.

The core ideas that emerged from this discussion were:

- The PC chair will reach out to TRORC and request their participation in the PC's November, 9, 2022 meeting. This meeting may turn into an initial public discussion facilitated by TRORC for the purpose of explaining the process of revising a town plan and engaging members of the community in a general discussion about what Vershire's future planning needs could be.
- PC members should pursue grant funding [Municipal Planning grants-Agency of Commerce & Development and/or other funding streams identified by TRORC] to help Vershire host a series of public discussions over the course of the next year. Ideally, these conversations would be moderated by persons with expertise/development professionals.
- J. Will suggested hosting public meetings on specific Town Plan topics and spacing them out over a calendar year to allow for more prepared and focused discussions. This process would allow discussion leaders time to prepare and give residents opportunities to engage with topics that are of interest to them. G. Craft requested bringing S. Atwood-HO into the planning stages in re: mental health issues in Vershire.
- PC members were encouraged to reach out to nearby PCs that are innovating with respect to energy use: such as the recent creation of a 7-town "energy district" of Barnard, Bradford, Norwich, Sharon, Strafford, Thetford, and Woodstock.
- Overall, Town Plans are overarching (aspirational) documents that also need to contain specific language in order to have concrete impacts and/or allow for enforcement (for example, allowing or restricting telecommunications installations in certain locations).

**Other:** None.

**Adjourn:** G. Wilson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:55pm. N. Thames seconded. The motion passed unanimously.