

**Town of Vershire Planning Commission Meeting Minutes DRAFT
Wednesday, October 12, 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, and Meghan Ashbury (TRORC).

Call to Order: G. Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:01pm

Agenda Review & Modifications: None.

Public & Staff Comments: None at this time.

Approval of Last Meeting Draft Minutes: G. Wilson moved to approve the minutes of September 14, 2022 as written. J. Will seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business: Meghan Asbury, Planner with Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) arrived for a meet and greet event with the Planning Commission and members of town committees and selectboard that ran from 6-7pm. She stayed for the first half hour of the regular planning commission meeting. G. Wilson noted that the PC is grateful for her help advising on the process the PC will follow to revise the town plan.

Resolution for Municipal Planning grant: (signing) N. Thames moved to pass the Municipal Planning Y23 grant resolution. J. Will seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Town Plan: (Structure for Revision). M. Ashbury asked the commissioners if there were topics that they especially wish to focus on when revising the Town Plan:

Housing: As a member of a local school board, N. Thames has witnessed first hand how lack of affordable housing has meant the district losing several potential teachers in the district. Also, young families who cannot find/afford existing housing cannot consider moving to Vershire. The cost to build puts available lots out of reach for people with modest incomes and there is very little rental housing available.

Childcare: G. Wilson noted that lack of childcare is an obvious corollary to attracting young families to Vershire

Homesteading: small-scale agricultural businesses need to be considered in relation affordability and real estate tax assessments.

Economic development: J. Will would like to find ways to develop the local economy. M. Ashbury asked where most do their grocery shopping: Lebanon or Bradford area.

Respecting Vershire's rural character: N. Thames wants to make sure the TP is explicit when allowing traditional uses of the land so that traditional practices (such as hunting and agriculture) can continue.

Community Partners/Engagement: M. Ashbury asked if there were any community groups involved in activities/projects that would provide helpful insights for revising the TP: Just some of the events/ongoing projects are: the TCB committee and the pavilion project; the recreation committee and town ice rink; the EC and it's efforts to increase sustainable infrastructure in the town; Vershare—which sponsors or collaborates on many town-wide events and fundraisers for programs such as a free youth summer camp; the VFD and emergency services n Vershire; the Vershire Historical society' and its interest in historic sites/preservation;

Long-term outcomes: M. Ashbury asked if there were long-term outcomes that the PC would like to see as a result of a new TP: a pedestrian solution to crossing VT113 from the TC to Vershare/Town Office; a growth in resiliency (needs defining: health?), and the maintenance of and creation of recreational paths and trails. These outcomes are in addition to goals/topics noted above. M. Ashbury recommends reading the TP of Pomfret, which is similar in size to Vershire.

Organizing community discussions/soliciting community feedback:

By topic

By problem

By creating a purpose statement for each section

Logistics: Could these information gathering meetings be held during or immediately following regular PC meetings? At present, the PC will conduct these meetings within a regular meeting. J. Will agreed to take charge of publicizing opportunities for Vershire residents to participate in these discussions on revising the TP. He will also create a survey and other materials to solicit community input. Other strategies to gather public feedback include spending time at the recycling station on Saturday mornings, and asking town committee chairs to solicit feedback from their members and contacts. M. Ashbury agreed to attend a Vershare meeting if it can be arranged.

Old Business: None

Other: None

Adjourn: G. Wilson moved to adjourn at 7:43pm. N. Thames seconded. The motion passed unanimously.