

**Town of Vershire Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 8, 2023 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, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, and Debra Kingsbury.

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

Agenda Review & Modifications: None at this time.

Public & Staff Comments: None at this time.

Approval of Minutes: G. Wilson moved to approve the minutes of 1/11/23. B. Perkins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Affordable Senior Housing: D. Kingsbury wanted to share her thoughts on some parcels of land that could be developed in the future as elder community housing and/or assisted living housing. A discussion of what type of housing is needed and desired would be helpful in the process of revising the Town Plan section on housing. She was encouraged to attend the special "housing" meeting in the Town Center building that has been rescheduled for March 22nd at 7pm. She identified 4 parcels that have such potential, only one of which is currently on the market and all but one are in the newly-designated Village District. Their sizes range between 9-171 acres and possess various levels of services.

D. Kingsbury noted that seniors want to stay in their communities, need/want access to services (transportation, food options, medical facilities, etc.) and social networks. These concerns would need to be considered in order to interest elderly residents who want to remain living in Vershire or stay in the area. Because D. Ward ran a small 8-person elderly housing facility, inviting her to share her thoughts on senior housing during the Housing discussion on March 22nd could be instructive. Some important considerations for encouraging such a project in the town plan would be getting feedback on the scale and affordability of such a concept, the need for additional affordable housing stock for staff to live in, and consideration of other impacts (to be determined) related to encouraging such a housing development. D. Kingsbury offered to mark and scan the relevant sections of the parcel map and send copies to PCs prior to the March Housing meeting. It would make sense to encourage this aspect of the housing discussion to consider the different types of senior housing Vershire might encourage: (multiple independent residences, assisted living facilities, ADUs, duplexes or other.

Pedestrian Bridge: J. Will would like the support of the Planning Commissioners to pursue planning discussions for a pedestrian bridge that crosses the Ompompanoosuc river in the Village District and would connect Vershire and the Town Center building and recreational facilities. He considers talking to someone at TRORC as the first step towards developing a vision and a plan and would be willing to continue working on this as a volunteer after he steps down in March and while he is out of the country for the Navy for most of the rest of 2023.

Action J. Will moved to have the Planning Commission allow him to begin a conversation with TRORC about a pedestrian bridge for Vershire. G. Wilson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business: The PC agreed to reschedule the Housing topic meeting for March 22, 2023 at 7pm. J. Will has plans to promote the topic discussion on Economic Development scheduled for February 22, 2023 at 7pm in the Town Center.

Announcements: *A Bi-State Discussion on Climate Migration: The Connecticut River Joint Commissions invites you to participate in a discussion about planning for climate migration. This series is planned for the bi-state Connecticut River Valley (CRV) region in NH and VT.*

“There’s good reason to believe the CRV will be increasingly attractive to those who want to move away from coastal flooding and storms, wildfires and smoke, and the scarcity of fresh water elsewhere. These discussions will examine the local planning and decision-making necessary to encourage needed homes and direct them to places best suited to protect the CRV’s resources and resilience for generations to come. This event will also grapple with how to plan for accommodating both new and current residents, when we are already struggling with a housing crisis.”

For more information and to register:

<https://www.crjc.org/calendar-projects/makingroom/>

Adjourn: G. Wilson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8pm. J. Will seconded. The motion passed unanimously.