

Town of Vershire Planning Commission Meeting Minutes DRAFT
Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Vershire Town Center.

Attendance: Gregory Wilson-co-chair, Eleanor Zue-co-chair, Seann Cram, Michelle Massa, Justin Will (remotely), Helen Wilson-secretary. Guests: Gretchen Harvey, Holly Groschner, chair, Corinth Selectboard

Call to Order: G. Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Approval of Minutes: Gregory moved to approve the minutes of 9/11/24. Seann seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Guest speaker: Analyzing community law enforcement needs and options. Holly Groschner, chair, Corinth Selectboard

In October 2024, the Planning Commission submitted a draft anti-harassment and nuisance ordinance to the Vershire Selectboard. They sent it back to the Planning Commission to learn how it could be enforced. In support of this, Gregory invited Holly Groschner to share Corinth's experience with community law enforcement. Ms. Groschner began by clarifying that although she is an attorney, nothing she says tonight is to be construed as legal advice. She suggests we contact Vershire's attorney for legal advice as needed.

She described the four levels of law enforcement in Vermont.

- 1)** Constable: This position became obsolete because of training and supervision needs, and safety concerns, having inadequate authority and backup.
- 2)** Sheriff's Department: They can enforce local ordinances, but only under contract with a town.
- 3)** Vermont State Police: Towns can contract with them to enforce State Law, both criminal and civil. Contracts can be for any length of time, beginning with one month.
- 4)** Town-owned police departments sometimes contract with nearby towns to share services

Ms. Groschner handed out information about the 261 Law Enforcement Calls made to Corinth between June 2023 and June 2024, including the number answered by the Vermont State Police, the Orange County Sheriff, and the Fish and Wildlife service. Considering those numbers, and a second handout describing law enforcement contracts with the Sheriff's Department, she detailed how Corinth is entering into a contract with the Vermont State Police, with a budget of \$18,000. per year. She noted that Vershire is currently spending \$0 per year on law enforcement. Her recommendation was that the Planning Commission compose a letter to the Selectboard suggesting they consider adding a budget item to cover the cost of entering into a contract with the Vermont State Police or one of the nearby towns with a town police department. She also recommended a public meeting including the Selectboard and someone from the Vermont State Police.

Town Plan Draft and Public Hearing

A Public Hearing on the draft Town Plan is scheduled for Wednesday, November 20, 2024 at 6:00 pm. Copies of the Town Plan draft including maps and the Hearing Notice were distributed to the 4 adjoining towns' Planning Commissions, as well as the Town Clerk and Selectboard of Vershire. Notices were placed in local newspapers and posted in Vershire. And a copy of the draft plan was posted on the Vershire Town website. Notices were also posted to the town Facebook page and in the List-serve.

After the Hearing, the Planning Commission make any necessary adjustments to the Plan, and will then submit it to the Selectboard, who will make any changes they deem appropriate, and will schedule a public hearing before it goes before the town for a vote.

Next regular Meeting, Wednesday, December 11th.

Planning Commission Public Hearing scheduled for November 20th.

Announcements/Other: None.

Adjourn: M. Massa moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 pm. Eleanor seconded. The motion passed unanimously.