

Minutes Vermont Downtown Board 03/22/2021

Meeting held via conference call in compliance with the Executive Order 01-20

Members Present (13):

- Josh Hanford (*Chair*), designated by the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development
- Dave Pelletier, alternate, designated by the Secretary of Transportation
- Billy Coster, alternate designated by the Secretary of Natural Resources (left at 3:33pm)
- Robert Sponable, alternate, designated by the Commissioner of Public Safety
- Laura Trieschmann, State Historic Preservation Officer (left at 3:39pm)
- Jaime Lee, appointed by the Governor, representing the Vermont Natural Resources Council and the Preservation Trust of Vermont.
- Mayor David Allaire, designated by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns
- Michael McDonough, appointed by the governor, representing local government (left at 3:38pm)
- Bruce Cheeseman, appointed by the Governor, representing local government
- Chip Sawyer, designated by the Vermont Planners Association
- Greg Boulbol, designated by the Chair of the Natural Resources Board
- Tasha Wallis, designated by the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies
- Cathy Davis, appointed by the Governor, representing the Vermont Association of Chamber Executives

Attending Community Planning and Revitalization (CP+R) Team Members (5): Chris Cochran, Richard Amore, Gary Holloway, Jacob Hemmerick, and Jenni Lavoie.

Guests (40): Karen Galayda, Town of Corinth; Chris Groschner, Town of Corinth; Ilona Blanchard, City of South Burlington; Tom Badowski, Town of Berlin; Karla Nuissl, Town of Berlin; Polly McMurtry, Town of Berlin; Brandy Saxton, PlaceSense; Paul Simon, Park Architecture; Ken Simon, Berlin Mall; Michael Rushman, Berlin Mall; Jim Alvarez, CVMC; Eileen Peltier, Downstreet Housing; Matt Moore, Evernorth; Bonnie Waninger, CVRPC; Clare Rock, CVRPC; Jacob Coakwell, Town of Berlin; Rob Allen, Town of Berlin; Wendelyn Bolles, Town of Berlin; Maxwell Kreiger, DHCD; Ben Doyle, PTV; Brad Dousevicz, Chestnut Place; Brian Shupe, VNRC; Chuck Storrow; Dave Birmingham, 802Cars; Nicola Anderson, Downstreet Housing; Ed Bove, RRPC; Eileen Hee, CVMC; Elise Thorsen; Ian Jakus, VHCB; Jamie Stewart, CVEDC; Jason Lazar; Jonas; Julie Curtin, Downstreet Housing; Kate McCarthy, VNRC; Kathy Beyer, Evernorth; Kay Nuissl; Kevin Eschelbach, Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce; Martin Hahn, VHCB; Michael Hellein, City of Barre; and Vince Conti.

Josh Hanford brought the meeting to order at 1:00 pm via GoTo Meeting virtual conference call.

Additions or Deletions to Board Agenda

Commissioner Hanford proposed to amend the order of the meeting to the following: public comment period for the consent agenda, review and board vote on the consent agenda, public comment for the Berlin New Town Center application, then proceed with the remainder of the agenda as presented.

Chip Sawyer made a motion to approve the changes to the agenda, and Tasha Wallis seconded. Ayes: Billy Coster, Bruce Cheeseman, Cathy Davis, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Dave Pelletier, Greg Boulbol, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael McDonough, Robert Sponable, Tasha Wallis, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

1. Public Comment Period for Consent Agenda

Chris Groschner, with the Town of Corinth, thanked the board for their review of the applications for Cookeville and East Corinth village center designation, and hopes the board will vote positively.

Ilona Blanchard with the City of South Burlington, shared that the City is happy with their experience with department staff, and happy to be part of the New Town Center designation program.

2. Consent Agenda Items:

There were no questions on the following agenda items:

- January 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- Village Center Designations, Town of Corinth
 - Cookeville
 - East Corinth
- Village Center Renewals, Town of Wallingford
 - Wallingford Village
 - East Wallingford
 - South Wallingford
- Downtown Designation – 4-Year Check-In
 - Bristol
 - Randolph
 - St. Albans City
- New Town Center – 4 Year Check-In
 - South Burlington

Cathy Davis made a motion to approve the consent agenda, and Bruce Cheeseman seconded. Ayes: Billy Coster, Bruce Cheeseman, Cathy Davis, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Dave Pelletier, Greg Boulbol, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Michael McDonough, Robert Sponable, Tasha Wallis, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

3. Public Comment Period for Berlin New Town Center Application

Commissioner Hanford provided context for Berlin’s New Town Center Application.

The following spoke in support of the New Town Center:

- Bonnie Waninger, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
- Kevin Eschelbach, Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce
- Dave Birmingham, President of 802 Cars
- Kay Nuissl, Berlin Mall LLC
- Jamie Stewart, Central Vermont Regional Development Corporation
- Chuck Storrow, Berlin Mall LLC

The following spoke in opposition of the New Town Center:

- Kate McCarthy, Vermont Natural Resources Council
- Michael Hellein, Chair of the Barre City Planning Commission

- Brian Shupe, Vermont Natural Resources Council

4. New Town Center Application – Town of Berlin

Commissioner Hanford framed the proceedings and Board charge.

Jacob Hemmerick provided board members an overview of the New Town Center.

Berlin Town officials presented an overview of the New Town Center application. As the Town completed its presentation, they e-mailed a rebuttal of the staff report to the Board.

Jacob Hemmerick presented an overview of the staff report.

Several Board members expressed concern about the volume of information received that day and requested a pause for further consideration.

Cathy Davis made a motion for a continuance of the Berlin New Town Center application review, which will be held at a special Downtown Board meeting on Monday, April 12, 2021 at 1pm, and Chip Sawyer seconded. Ayes: Bruce Cheeseman, Cathy Davis, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Dave Pelletier, Greg Boulbol, Jaime Lee, Laura Trieschmann, Robert Sponable, Tasha Wallis, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried.

5. Old Business / New Business

Chris Cochran informed board members that at the next normally scheduled meeting, Monday, April 26th, the board would be reviewing and awarding the Downtown Transportation Fund applications. A training on the program, and scoring will be available for new board members, and other board members who would like to join.

6. Adjourn

Tasha Wallis made a motion to adjourn, and Chip Sawyer seconded. Ayes: Bruce Cheeseman, Cathy Davis, Chip Sawyer, Dave Allaire, Dave Pelletier, Greg Boulbol, Jaime Lee, Robert Sponable, Tasha Wallis, and Josh Hanford. The motion carried. The Downtown Board meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Jacob Hemmerick