

NEWPORT CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

January 5th, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Charles Elliott, Robert Currier, Clark Curtis, Woodman Page, and Dan Ross

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Pam Ladds

7:00 p.m. Chair Charles Elliott called the meeting to order. Clark Curtis moved to approve the minutes of the December 22nd meeting. This was seconded by Robert Currier. **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION.**

7:02 p.m. Procedures for the Editing Rewrite of City Bylaw: Chair Elliott stated that he had conducted research on the State's Open Meeting Law. Chair Elliott had acquired a copy of the law and stated that the Planning Commission could begin work on updating the City Bylaws. Clark Curtis inquired whether Chair Elliott had investigated the issue in relation to the Open Meeting Law and Irasburg's town officials. Charles Elliott explained that the Irasburg issue did not affect individual members of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission can work at home on the Bylaws, but if any changes are to be made then a hard copy would need to be presented at the next planning meeting. Chair Elliott stated that this was good news, but when he went to upload the City Bylaws onto Google Docs that the lines related to the various diagrams did not show up. Dan Ross added that this issue was not uncommon with Google Docs and felt that the commission members would just have to work with the PDF form of the City Bylaws. Dan Ross also confirmed that recreating the drawings for the Bylaws would be the most difficult part of the update. Another issue that was pointed out was that a thorough review of the bylaws would have to be conducted to ensure that the references cited were accurate as well as the definitions. Chair Elliott stated that additional bylaws were looked at earlier last summer and that they could also be added to the bylaws for eventual review. Further discussion included what may or may not be allowed in a commercial district and how enforcement should be handled through the zoning administrator.

7:26 p.m. Other Business: Robert Currier and Clark Curtis asked if Planning Commission members would be receiving city email addresses. Charles Elliott stated that the city's capacity for issuing additional email addresses was full and that there was also a cost factor involved. This raised concerns on how Planning Commission members should respond when they received general email inquiries from the public on their own personal email addresses. Chair Elliott stated that as the Zoning Administrator that he was the person to contact and all inquiries should be directed to him. Clark Curtis stated that when the public makes inquiries to him that he refers the public to call the city offices at 6992. Pam Ladds added that there are situations where information is not being forwarded to members of the Planning Commission. Pam Ladds provided an example where the Vermont Secretary of State held a meeting in Newport on the Open Meeting Law with no officials from the City of Newport in attendance. Ms Ladds point was that

if Planning Commission members had city email addresses then they might have been included in that informational meeting.

In other business, Clark Curtis asked if there were any penalties to be held against the Historical Preservation Commission (HPC) for not meeting at least four times during the year. Charles Elliott stated that he was not aware of any penalties and that he would put together a Historical Commission meeting in the near future. Clark Curtis also inquired on the status of Pam Ladds being placed on the HPC and Charles Elliott stated that the HPC board members would remain at five. Pam Ladds could only be considered to fill a vacancy when one occurs in the future.

7:59 p.m Next Meeting: The next meeting will be scheduled for January 19th, 2016 at 7p.m.

8:00 p.m. Clark Curtis made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded by Robert Currier.
APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION.

Minutes taken and transcribed by Woodman Page

Approved: Charles Elliott Date: 01/21/2016