

## Newport City Planning Commission Minutes

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Members Present: John Monette, Chair  
Denis Chenette, Vice Chair  
Amanda (Mandy) Chaput – Secretary  
Kevin Mead  
Carole O’Connell

Guests: Laura Dolgin, City Manager  
Alison Lowe, NVDA  
Richard Tetreault, Chair, NCDD  
Rick Ufford-Chase, Chair NCDD Community Engagement Specialist  
Karen Geraghty - NCIC

1: Chair Monette called the Planning Commission Meeting to Order at 6:12pm

2: Approval of the Minutes of the November 16, 2021, Meeting. Mr. Mead made the motion to approve, Ms. O’Connell seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved.

3: Chair Monette introduced Commission members, audience members, and presenters for the evening. Guest speakers include Richard Tetreault, Chair of the NCDD, Rick Ufford-Chase, NCDD Community Engagement Specialist, and Karen Geraghty of NCIC.

Mr. Tetreault, Mr. Ufford-Chase, and Karen Geraghty provided a powerpoint presentation (attached) explaining the purpose and advantages of the Downtown Designation. The Designation is a land use planning tool that provides revitalization of communities, to drive housing, retail and commercial growth into the traditional downtown area.

Vermont State Statute 24 V.S.A. 2791 requires the municipality to define the downtown area to meet the core characteristics of the compact settlement pattern. The Municipality is the applicant for the downtown designation program, which requires a community reinvestment agreement to demonstrate commitment to support downtown interests. The Agreement must provide a source of funding, and appoint a downtown organization to support development through economic development, design and promotional activities.

The model comes from the Main Street America transformation strategies. The transformation requires Four Committees – Design, Economic Vitality, Promotions, and Organization.

Downtown Dollars Program – Community National Bank sells certificates of \$20 for purchase to be used at any downtown business. The business then returns the dollars into the Community National Bank, dollar for dollar.

The powerpoint contains a description of other benefits the city and downtown businesses receive as a result of the designation.

Guests left the meeting at 7:36pm

4: City Development Plan: Ms. Lowe asked if we wanted to begin posting sections of the municipal plan draft online, more specifically, the housing section since that has been appropriately vetted. Public Meetings for the City Development Plan will begin in 2022 with the Planning Commission. Then, the City Council will hold two additional public meetings before they vote. It would be a good practice for the document to be circulated to the public. Ms. Dolgin suggested posting it on the City of Newport website. This was endorsed by the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission agenda will include an item for public comment. The Rules of Procedure were readopted at the April 6, 2021 meeting, and a sign in sheet will be offered at each meeting.

Discussion ensued about adding a section to accommodate a Neighborhood Development Area as defined in the Downtown Designation as well as Energy Efficiency.

5: Old Business: None

6: New Business: Zoning administrator candidates have been interviewed and it is hoped an appointment will be made at the City council meeting scheduled for December 20th.

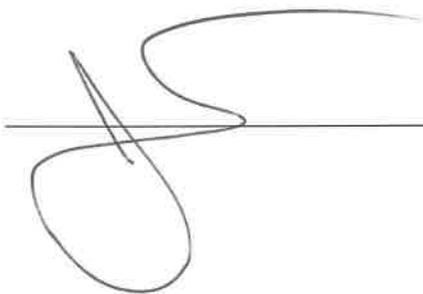
7: Set Agenda will look like the agenda as tonight's, without a Guest Speaker.

8: Denis Chenette moved to adjourn at 8:20pm, with Carole O'Connell seconding.

Respectfully Submitted by Mandy Chaput, Planning Commission Secretary.

Unofficial Until Approved

Approved this 15th day of Feb, 2022



\_\_\_\_\_  
Planning Commission Chair