City of Newport Planning Commission Minutes
Tuesday, April 19, 2022

Members Present: Denis Chenette, Vice-Chair (Acting Chair)
Amanda (Mandy) Chaput, Secretary
Carole O'Connell

Guests: Alison Low, NVDA

Regrets: Kevin Mead
John Monette, Chair

1. **Call to Order:** Vice Chair Denis Chenette called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.
2. **Approval of the Minutes** of the Tuesday, April 5, 2022; Ms. O'Connell moved to approve the minutes and Ms. Chaput seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.
3. **Public Comment:** None
4. **Clarification of Zoning District for Former RCI Building:** Acting Zoning Administrator John Harlamert reached out to the Commission with questions regarding a change of zoning on Lakemont that took place in late 2018 and early 2019 involving what is known as the former RDI building. The owner is attempting to market the empty building originally built as light industrial. The area was changed to public health to accommodate a proposed senior living facility. The December 2018 PC minutes make special note that the Metaflex building is grandfathered as light industrial. The RDI building owner believes he will have better luck marketing the space as light industrial but requests confirmation of the designated zoning so that he can market the property as such. Mr. Chenette offered to research this issue and will report back to the commission.
5. **City Development Plan:** Ms. Low has done an exceptional job in consolidating information to lessen the number of appendices. Ms. Low pointed out the detail regarding flood and flood plains and suggests the municipality look at regulating the river corridors. There are funds in place to assist in disaster relief which helps towns pay for damaged infrastructure in the event of a natural disaster. The city recently received a small grant to update the Hazard Mitigation Plan which is due to expire in November of this year. 'Energy burden' is becoming more of a relevant issue that may require a slightly heavier emphasis. Discussion regarding solar panels and other options for participation amongst people who are unable to use solar themselves. VEC runs a 'sponsor a panel' program, in which individuals can sponsor a solar panel and get a monthly credit on their electric bill. https://vermontelectric.coop/co-op-community-solar
The commission reviewed the solid waste portion. Ms. Low referred to the objectives and action items to see if the commission had feedback and ideas on how to consolidate these. Ms. O'Connell suggested to emphasize the importance of keeping the integrity of Newport's environment.
Roundtable discussion on how to best engage the citizens of Newport when it comes to more accountability in contributing to the amount of waste. Including starting a discussion on Front Porch Forum about use of cardboard v. plastic. Increase awareness for single-use plastic. Are there local companies that would get on board to assist in this effort? Idea is to support efforts on food rescue efforts, support outreach and education on reuse and recycling. Perhaps supporting local initiatives to repair things that aren't quite ready for the dump. A Repair Café.

Ms. Low spoke about her experiences with fixing items at a repair café on the Lyndon Institute campus. Establishing an energy committee to increase awareness of issues is one possible action item.

6. **Old Business**: None
7. **New Business:** None
8. Set a draft agenda for the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting on Tuesday, May 3, 2022, at 6:00pm. Agenda will be like the agenda for tonight except for including the clarification of zoning district for former RCI Building.
9. **Adjourn.** Motion made to adjourn by Ms. O'Connell and seconded by Ms. Chaput at 8:05 pm

Respectfully Submitted by Amanda (Mandy) Chaput, Secretary
Unofficial Until Approved

Approved this 4th day of May, 2022

Chair, City of Newport Planning Commission