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**Town of New Haven**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**REMOTE Public Meeting**  
**Monday, April 12, 2021**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Planning Commission Members Present via Remote:**

Co-chairs Benj Putnam and Rob Litch; Bev Landon, Pat Palmer, and Kathy Cahill.

**Absent:** Maggie Eaton

**Staff Present via Remote:**

Aaron Brown: Zoning Administrator & Town Administrator

Peggy Connor: Minutes

**Visitors Present via Remote:**

Amanda Bodell

John Mazzuchi

**I. Call to Order:**

Co-chair Benj Putnam called the remote meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**1. Adjustments to Agenda:**

Agenda item III. Energy Committee Update DEFERRED.

**2. Visitors' Business:**

None.

**II. Zoning Administrator Update:**

Aaron Brown reported that the Addison County Solid Waste Management District (ACSWMD) submitted an Act 250 application to Addison County Regional Planning last week for space on one of the six Norris lots to park a truck to collect debris that would supplement Saturday service. The Selectboard will hear about the project at its next meeting. Also, the Development Review Board will consider an application for a boundary line adjustment on Town Hill Road at its next meeting, and a conditional use application for an obstacle course on the 32+/- acre wooded property at 2304 Main Street.

**III. Energy Committee Update: DEFERRED.**

**IV. Scheduling Jens Hilke's Presentation on Forest Fragmentation:**

At the Planning Commission's March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, Susan Smiley invited members to hold a joint meeting with the Conservation Commission to hear speaker Jens Hawkins-Hilke, a conservation planner with Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. Jens provides technical assistance to municipalities and regional commissions related to land use planning for wildlife and wildlife habitat management. Following discussion, it was agreed to hold a special meeting, separate from the Planning Commission's regular meeting on June 14<sup>th</sup>. Aaron will coordinate with Susan Smiley to determine a firm date.

**V. Bylaw Revisions:**

**1. Tiny House Regulations**

**2. Airstrips and Helipads**

**3. Retail Cannabis**

In terms of timelines, Aaron suggested the goal be to pass the Bylaw revisions this summer. He added that some delay has resulted from not being able to review mapping revisions in person

55 as a group during the pandemic; however, that may likely change sometime in May. Regarding  
56 the three subcategories listed above, Aaron suggested that Retail Cannabis first be considered  
57 as it relates to potential new regulations, but since the Town has not yet voted on whether to  
58 allow retail cannabis, Planning Commission members may not want to spend time writing new  
59 regulations should voters oppose the measure.

60  
61 Aaron noted that it appears that the House bill related to Tiny Houses has stalled in committee;  
62 therefore, it was recommended in the meantime to treat them as mobile homes, or any other  
63 house, if on a permanent foundation. Bev Landon asked if a transport vehicle, such as a tiny  
64 home on wheels licensed for travel on the road, was exempt from zoning regulations. Aaron  
65 noted it was his understanding that the exemption rule applies if the home is removed after 60  
66 days, and the same holds true for wastewater regulations. In his recent letter to Representative  
67 Kevin Christie, Aaron asked for clarification on what constitutes a temporary versus permanent  
68 structure; alternative waste disposal systems; and a uniform standard for registering tiny homes.

69  
70 Aaron forwarded the following suggested language defining Airstrips and Helipads: “An area of  
71 land used as a runway to allow the landing, take-off, and storage of propeller airplanes used for  
72 private, non-commercial purposes.”

73  
74 Following a brief discussion, members agreed to substitute “airplanes” with “aircraft,” and delete  
75 “propeller.”

76  
77 On the topic of Retail Cannabis, Aaron noted that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns  
78 (VLCT) has advised that per state law, towns that make no decision about retail cannabis  
79 through a town vote will be presumed to have allowed retail cannabis by October 2023. Aaron  
80 pointed out that surrounding municipalities, Vergennes and Middlebury, have both voted to  
81 allow retail cannabis. In terms of zoning regulations, factors such as hours of operation and  
82 location will need to be considered. Benj Putnam recommended review of the law itself for  
83 specific restrictions, and the Town’s ability to regulate the sale of cannabis. Aaron suggested  
84 that the Planning Commission could provide interim guidance to the Selectboard when the  
85 Board considers the matter.

86  
87 Aaron will share with members the VLCT webinar on all recent legislation.

88  
89 **VI. Regional Planning Commission Activities:**

90  
91 Aaron Brown reported that Dr. Cheryl Mitchell approached the Town regarding a \$60,000  
92 community development block grant for the purpose of looking at countywide needs for early  
93 childhood education.

94  
95 Also the Town is working with Addison County Regional Planning Commission to keep abreast  
96 of allocated Covid-related federal funding. It remains unclear at this time the amount and how  
97 these funds are to be used.

98  
99 Regarding relocation of the train depot at the Route 7 crossing in New Haven, there are  
100 currently four potential sites: 1) a town-owned lot north of the Town Office on North Street; 2)  
101 next to Village Green Market; along Memorial Park; 3) halfway between the Village Green  
102 Market site and the junction; and 4) land across from the depot where Livingston Farms display  
103 storage units. At this time, with the exception of the town-owned land, it’s unknown what is  
104 available for purchase. Also, the potential use of the building may limit options for different  
105 parcels. The next meeting on the depot is scheduled for Thursday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.

106

Town of New Haven  
Planning Commission  
Monday, April 12, 2021

107 **VII. Approval of Minutes - November 9, 2020; March 8, 2021:**  
108 Consideration of the meeting minutes for November 9, 2020 DEFERRED.

109  
110 Aaron reviewed the meeting minutes for the Special Energy Plan Public Hearing, and Planning  
111 Commission Regular Meeting on March 8, 2021. It was suggested to post them as two separate  
112 documents on the Town's website. Kathy Cahill moved to approve minutes for the Special  
113 Energy Plan Public Hearing on March 8, 2021; Bev Landon seconded. **MOTION PASSED**  
114 **UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

115  
116 Bev Landon moved to approve minutes for the Planning Commission's regular meeting on  
117 March 8, 2021; Kathy Cahill seconded. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

118  
119 Kathy Cahill moved to adjourn; Bev Landon seconded.  
120 **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE**

121  
122 Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

123  
124 Respectfully submitted,  
125 Peggy Connor

126  
127 \_\_\_\_\_  
128 Rob Litch

\_\_\_\_\_

Benj Putnam

129  
130  
131 \_\_\_\_\_  
132 Beverly Landon

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Pat Palmer

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136 Kathy Cahill