

Approved October 16, 2024

CORNWALL PLANNING COMMISSION (CPC)

Regular Meeting

Cornwall Town Hall and via Teleconference

September 18, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lauren Ringey (meeting Chair), Katherine Branch, Mickey Heinecken, Don Burns, Chet Van Dellen, Conor Stinson

ALSO PRESENT: Rob Gill, Shari Johnson, Barbara Greenwood, Mary Dodge

Recording announced.

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by the CPC Chair, Conor Stinson.

QUORUM - established

AGENDA - Katherine B. MOVED / Lauren R. SECONDED a motion to approve the agenda as presented. ***Motion passed*** - 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

MINUTES

August 21, 2024 - Lauren R. MOVED / Chet V.D. SECONDED a motion to approve the minutes as presented. ***Motion passed*** - 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Katherine contacted the grants administrator of the Municipal Planning Grants and finds out that since their online application system is being updated, the application process has been pushed back to 2025.
- Conor reported that Caroline Mellish is resigning from the CPC, effective immediately, due to her inability to come to meetings.
- Conor is resigning from the CPC, effective at the end of the year, and stepping down as Chair at the end of September.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

NEW BUSINESS

• DRB conversation on Zoning and Subdivision regulations

Barbara Greenwood, Chair of the DRB, and Shari Johnson, Vice Chair of the DRB discussed with the CPC their recommendations for revision and clarification of current zoning and subdivision regulations. The DRB met with the Zoning Administrator to discuss zoning and subdivision regulations and shared with the CPC a written detailed list of 21 specific suggestions for revision and clarification. The DRB recommends that the CPC revise the regulations only as necessary, as by and large, the current

regulations work. Examples of necessary revisions: to clarify provisions, to streamline the approval process, to update or add provisions to reflect current State law, or to add provisions to implement the new Town Plan. Barbara and Shari offered ongoing help and feedback from the DRB during the regulations update process, including reviewing proposed provisions as the process ensues.

- **CCC presentation on habitat connectivity map and next steps**

Mary Dodge, Co-chair of the Conservation Commission, summarized how the Town has responded to Act 171, passed in 2018, that mandated a map in the Town Plan showing habitat connectivity and that encouraged municipal planning on habitat connectivity and big forest blocks. Mary said that data on the habitat connectivity map currently in the Town Plan was taken from what was available at the time on the State bio-locator and may underestimate the extent of connectivity in Cornwall. The State has added new higher resolution data layers to the bio-finder this year. Mary shared the Cornwall Wildlife Habitat Project: Connectivity Blocks Map (that includes the new data) and showed how this differs from the map that is currently in the Town Plan. She suggested that the Town Plan could be updated with an additional Habitat Connectivity map, for the benefit of town residents and as a reference for decision makers, including the DRB, Zoning Administrator, interested property buyers, and the highway department. Such a map would be useful as a reference when creating overlay districts in the Zoning regulations update and would assist the Conservation Commission in its advisory work with landowners and the town, “to reduce forest fragmentation, enhance forest health, and support essential ecological functions.” Next step: This matter will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Determine how to fill role of CPC Chair** - tabled until the next meeting

- **Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) group representative from CPC**

Don Burns said he is willing to represent the Planning Commission at monthly meetings to work on updating the LEMP. He added that the group has not met yet.

ACTION ITEMS

1. The meeting Chair should add “review of Town Plan action items” to the meeting agenda.
2. Send the agenda out 7 days before each meeting.
3. Remember to add Public Comments to the agenda of all meetings.
4. Add discussion of an additional habitat connectivity map and how to fill the role of Chair on the agenda for the October meeting.

Remaining 2024 Meeting Chair Rotation

- October - Conor Stinson
- November - Chet Van Dellen
- December - not yet assigned, as Carolyn has resigned

ADJOURNMENT

Katherine B. MOVED / Mickey H. SECONDED a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion passed - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Secretary of the CPC

