

Montpelier Planning Commission
October 26, 2009
City Council Chambers, City Hall

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Missa Aloisi, John Bloch, Anne Campbell, Alan Goldman, Jesse Moorman, Bethany Pombar; also present Youth Members Lou Cecere and Lucia Bragg.
Staff: Gwendolyn Hallsmith, Director of Planning and Community Development.
Public: Sarah Mitchell

Call to Order:

The meeting of the October 26, 2009 Planning Commission was called to order by Gwen Hallsmith, staff. Planning Commission members introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting.

Bethany Pombar said she has sits on the Community Justice Center Advisory Board. She has been a CAN leader for the past year and has been an active member of ORE. She has a 9-year old daughter who attends Union Elementary School. They are active Hubbard Park users. She has a degree in Prevention and Community Development and her focus is more on the social systems so this is a good opportunity for her to think about how the social systems and infrastructure we build support each other.

Missa Aloisi lives on Kent Street. She lived in Montpelier from 2000 to 2005 and then moved to the west coast to attend graduate school and came back for her master's in architecture. She has been working in architecture for about nine years. She is really interested in the master planning process and has been involved in a couple across the country.

Lucia Bragg, a senior at Montpelier High School, serves as one of the youth members on the Planning Commission. She is really active in the community in several ways but mostly as an environmental activist and increasingly now more with global issues. She has served as a youth member of the Planning Commission since the spring of her sophomore year.

Ms. Hallsmith added Lucia was the one who actually pushed to have youth represented on the Planning Commission.

Lou Cecere said he lives on Connor Road in Montpelier. This is his first Planning Commission meeting. He is actually interested in architecture. He has a student internship through Montpelier High School at Black River Design. He is interested in the infrastructure of the city and how that plays into what the Planning Commission does.

Jesse Moorman said he has lived in Montpelier for six years and a member of the Planning Commission for less than two years. He lives on Terrace Street with his wife and dog. When he isn't on the Planning Commission he is representing clients who want Act 250 and zoning permits. He is a land use and environmental attorney in town. That is his gravity towards planning in general. He is a concerned citizen looking to be involved.

Anne Campbell said she lives on Murray Hill with her husband and dog. She has served on the Planning Commission the same length David Borgendale has in its inception when it separated from the Development Review Board, which is 1998 or 1999. While she was born in Montpelier she left when she attended college and they just moved back eight years ago. She just loves all of the things in Montpelier and very committed to this community. She chaired the Onion River Exchange from its inception until this past June or July. She comes out of a background of university teaching and administration and currently works as a mental health consultant for Central Vermont Community Action Council.

Alan Goldman said he has lived in Montpelier for about 20 years. He has been coming to these meetings a long time on both sides of the circle and decided a few years ago he would try to participate on this side. He is a builder and designs. He deeply loves and cares about Montpelier.

John Bloch said he lives on Winter Street over in the meadow. He has lived here for about 16 years and about 30 years before he lived down the road. Montpelier has been a hub trade center for 40 some years. He is keenly

interested in where Montpelier is going to go from this point forward. Times are different. Economies are different. Montpelier is vastly different than it was 15 years ago. He has been involved for most of his professional life in some

aspect of economic development and community development and how the economic development flows to a sustainable community. He came on in his early professional life when Mr. Nixon was bulldozing that stood in their way for freeways and urban centers so the cry was to try to keep communities together and make them economically viable. Now we see those challenges to small and medium sized communities throughout this state. There are some real issues afoot. Being retired he has the time to be fascinated. It is going to be very interesting how this city goes forward given all of the challenges. There are also opportunities, but there is a myriad of challenges.

Gwendolyn Hallsmith, the Planning Director, and has been the Planning Director for three years now. She has lived in Montpelier for five years but in Central Vermont for 18 years. Before this she did a lot of international work helping communities in other parts of the world become more sustainable when that was what they decided they wanted to do. She would lead them through planning processes and different kinds of projects. She has worked in just about every world region in that respect, Asia, Europe and Africa. That is something they need to talk about. She has to speak at the National League of Cities in Texas so won't be here for the next meeting. Kristin and Erin can come and there is a lot of enVisioning and Master Plan work to do so she wouldn't suggest they not have that meeting.

Sarah Mitchell just moved to Montpelier about three months ago. She graduated from the Conway School of Landscape Design so he is definitely interested in sustainable landscape design. She is interested in the planning side and getting involved. She wanted to know more about what their projects are. One of the big things she is interested in is what are the priorities of Vermont? What direction are the towns headed in?

Ms. Hallsmith said in David's absence she is willing to facilitate the election of the Chair. Everyone write down a nominee and your name on a piece of paper.

Anne Campbell was nominated by Bethany Pombar

Anne Campbell was nominated by Lucia Bragg

Jesse Moorman nominates Jesse Moorman

Jesse Moorman was nominated by Anne Campbell

David Borgendale was nominated by John Bloch

David Borgendale was nominated by Alan Goldman

The next thing they do with this method of election is that each one speaks to why we nominated the person they did.

Bethany Pombar said it was purely based on Anne's longevity with the Planning Commission and she probably brings a lot of vision with that.

Lucia Bragg said she nominated Anne because of how long she has been here and she knows what she is doing. She is an active member and she thinks she has the experience.

Jesse Moorman said he nominated himself and he wants to preserve continuity and wants to serve.

Anne Campbell nominated Jesse Moorman because he has been very conscientious and eloquent in his time here. His background and experience leads her to believe he would make an excellent Chair.

Alan Goldman nominated David Borgendale because he has been chair before and is experienced. It has to be someone who is organized and likes to take care of details. He thought he would be a great chair.

John Bloch said he has some experience with David in their other lives. He was very impressed with what David brought to the enVision experience and he knows him outside of City Hall. He is a very competent person that is dealing with some of these challenges that he obliquely referred to for the 21st century.

Ms. Hallsmith said now would be a time to speak to whether you are willing to be Chair. Jesse said he is willing to serve. It is her understanding from a conversation with David is that he is happy to stay Vice-Chair and not terribly

excited about being Chair. Mr. Goldman said he has heard that for many years. Now we'll go around and see if anybody has changed their mind about who they would like to have as Chair based on what they heard.

Ms. Pombar said she had changed her mind. She would nominate Jesse. Missa said she liked Jesse as well. Lucia said she liked Jesse. Mr. Goldman said he, too, would nominate Jesse since David doesn't want to do it. He feels he has the same organizational skills and understandings and would be a great Chair.

Congratulations to our new Planning Commission Chair, Jesse Moorman.

Review of Minutes:

Ms. Hallsmith said it doesn't look like any of the minutes have a quorum of people who attended the meetings where the minutes were taken. The minutes can just continue as needing approval, since it is unlikely that there will ever be a quorum of people who attended these meetings in attendance – two of the members who were at these meetings have moved out of town. She feels the minutes are very accurate, so it's unlikely that they would need to be changed in any case.

Review of Agenda:

In addition to the election of the Chair one of the things she neglected to suggest they think about are the other positions the Planning Commission needs to fill. There are a number of them. One is a representative to the Capitol Complex Commission; one is a representative to the Capital Planning Committee; a representative for the Steering Committee for enVision Montpelier and the various enVision Committee Chairs. That should be revisited because we have such a new group. The Capitol Complex Commission is the group that gets together from the state government to discuss developments in the state complex, which is part of Montpelier from Taylor Street west. The meetings don't happen all that often.

(End of tape – battery died)

enVision Montpelier Update

The current effort to ask the public to help set priorities in the plan was reviewed, and the Planning Commission agreed that highlighting a different part of the plan each month for the next five months would probably make it easier for people to participate. There was a lot of discussion about how input that comes in after the Steering Committee and the Planning Commission has considered it would be taken into account, and the consensus was that as long as it all was presented to City Council before the plan was adopted, it would ensure that citizens could continue to have a voice in the final document.

Commission members took new roles on the different committees. The new co-chairs for the enVision Committees are as follows:

Economics and Livelihoods – John Bloch
Governance – Bethany Pombar
Social and Human Development – Anne Campbell
Built Environment and Infrastructure – Alan Goldman
Natural Environment – Missa Aloisi

Jesse Moorman and David Borgendale will serve on the Steering Committee as Chair and Vice Chair. David Borgendale also serves as the city representative to the Regional Planning Commission.

Other Committee Assignments

Capitol Complex Commission – Jesse Moorman
Capital Improvement Plan – John Bloch

Project Updates were provided on the Growth Center Designation and the TIF application process, the Multi-Modal Transit Center, the District Energy Plant, Montpelier CAN, and the ORE REACH grant.

No action was taken.

Rules of Procedure Review

The Planning Commission reviewed their Rules of Procedure, for the benefit of the new members.

No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwendolyn Hallsmith