

I. Call to Order

Members Present: Mike O'Brien, Chair; Abby Bleything, Vice-Chair; Joe Perron; Tommie Murray

City Staff Present: Eric Vorwald

Guests Present: Kristine Lott, Mayor; Michael Arnold

Call to Order by: Mike O'Brien

Meeting Start Time: 6:38 PM

Minutes Recorded by: Eric Vorwald

II. Changes to the Agenda

None

III. Public Comment

Michael Arnold provided comments related to parking, including legislation making its way through the statehouse that could have impacts on parking.

IV. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Decision: 3 – 0 – 1

Motion by: Tommie

Second: Abby

Eric indicated that the agenda only included the minutes from the February 9th meeting, which were tabled at the February 23rd meeting so the Planning Commission could only take action on the February 9th minutes. With that, Tommie made a motion that was seconded by Abby to approve the February 09, 2023 minutes as presented. Joe abstained as he was not in attendance at the meeting.

V. Continued Discussion on Unified Land Use and Development Regulations – Multiple Sections

Eric provided an update on the plan for the review of the draft amendments to multiple sections of the land use regulations. He noted that Sarah had provided comments for consideration, and that he would also flag specific changes that were made based on discussions by the Planning Commission at previous meetings. Eric also indicated that he included with the agenda the new section (Section 5.15) on incentives for historic preservation that was previously discussed, Section 6.6 for site plan review as many of the graphics in the parking section were more appropriate in that location, and Article IX on definitions.

With no specific questions, the Planning Commission began their review at that start of Article

IV. Eric walked the Planning Commission through each section and highlighted items that had changed since the time they had reviewed the proposed language. He also included comments that Sarah had provided in advance for consideration. During this review, the Planning Commission offered additional suggestions and clarifications on specific items. This included language in Sections 4.1, 4.3, 4.6, and 4.9.

Next, the Planning Commission reviewed the proposed changes to the parking regulations. Eric highlighted several changes since the last review. The Planning Commission devoted time to reviewing and discussing the bicycle parking standards. Abby mentioned that she requested a review from Local Motion on the standards and they provided several specific comments. Abby agreed to provide the specific numbers to Eric for inclusion in the next draft.

After the discussion on parking, Eric quickly reviewed the changes that were proposed in Section 6.6 related to site plan review and Article IX on definitions. He indicated that the Planning Commission would take time at the next meeting to review these changes in detail, but generally indicated that the changes to Section 6.6 were primarily related to the relocation of graphics from Section 4.12 as they are more appropriately used in site plan review. He also highlighted several new definitions that help provide clarity and consistency with the regulations, including definitions that previously didn't exist in this section, but were needed for interpretation of the regulations.

VI. City Updates

Mayor Lott highlighted results from Town Meeting Day, including the passing of the City's budget. Eric indicated that the Development Review Board would meet on the 16th to reopen a hearing on the appeal of the zoning permit for the St. Stephen's Church.

VII. Other Business

Joe asked about the status of the Housing Initiative Director Position. Mayor Lott noted that a candidate would be interviewed on March 10th. Abby indicated that CATMA was close to announcing a new bike share provider. She also asked about areas that may be included in the geographical sphere that were in Colchester, since Colchester was not a partner. She noted that Shaw's was a location that was being considered, and the Mayor stated that the Costco area might also be appropriate. Tommie asked about St. Michael's College, and Abby indicated that it was also being considered. Eric stated that the next meeting would be On March 23rd and he would send materials next week.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion by: Joe

Second: Tommie

Meeting End Time: 8:17 PM