



May 17, 2023

Members Present: Richard Heilemann (Chair), Audrey Kolloff (Vice-Chair) [via Zoom], Anthony MacLaurin, Christie Bronstein, Eric Dorsch [via Zoom], Tom Scarnecchia [via Zoom]

Others Present: Janet Hurley (Bennington County Regional Commission), Deborah Towslee, Zoning Administrative Officer, Tom Deck, (President Board of Trustees) [via Zoom]

Call to Order: 11:03 AM by Mr. Heilemann

Changes to Agenda: None.

Public Comment: None.

Review Minutes: Meeting minutes reviewed.

Motion: To approve the April 19, 2023, minutes as presented. Made by Mr. MacLaurin, second by Ms. Kolloff. Passed unanimously.

Motion: To vote Deborah Towslee clerk of the Planning Committee. Made by Ms. Kolloff, second by Mr. Scarnecchia. Passed unanimously.

Discuss Short Term Rental (STR) Ordinance

Mr. Heilemann referenced the results of a report from a combined study (Town and Village) on the impact STRs have on the local economy. Mr. MacLaurin noted that some residents neighboring STR properties had expressed concern with excessive noise, intrusive outdoor lighting at night and open bonfires. Mr. MacLaurin expressed concern that there is no mechanism in place to track or police property owners that may use their homes as a STR. Mr. Dorsch believed that the study proved that STR properties require little additional regulation at this time but rather the owner(s) of the properties used as STRs are governed under current zoning bylaws and village ordinances. There was a consensus that more should be done through regulating and enforcing current zoning and village ordinances.

Mr. Dorsch applauded the idea that STRs register with the Village and that it be renewed annually. Mr. Scarnecchia suggested the process be relatively easy lest property owners refuse to comply. Mr. Scarnecchia suggested that the STR Officer use the registration opportunity to collect information to determine how often a property is rented and to better ascertain the true impact STRs have on the village. After collective discussion Mr. Scarnecchia recommended that a property owner indicate the number of times the property was rented on an annual registration document.

Discussion continued around governance of STRs and enforcement not included in the ordinance but necessary. Mr. Scarnecchia recommended developing an SOP outlining the process for documenting complaints and subsequent follow-up. Mr. Heilemann recommended utilizing the recent discussion with the Board of Trustees as well as the discussion today to modify the draft STR Ordinance prior to the next PC meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 31, 2023, at 11:00 am.

Discuss Modernization of Bylaws

Ms. Hurley presented a draft of the Manchester Village Land Use and Development Regulations. Mr. Heilemann recommended that the PC meet biweekly for “some time” allowing members the opportunity to review the extensive document noting that the finalized regulations must be approved before the end of the year. All members agreed.

Being no further business, the motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 01:37:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Towslee

Zoning Administrative Officer