July 26, 2023

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

Members Absent with Regrets: Tom Scarnecchia

Others Present: Deborah Towslee (Zoning Administrative Officer)

Call to Order: 11:07:49 AM by Mr. Heilemann

Changes to Agenda: Doctor Heilemann changed the order of the agenda items for discussion.

Public Comment: None.

Review Minutes: Meeting minutes of the Regular Meeting of the PC June 21, 2023, reviewed. R. Heilemann asked respectfully that he be referred to in future minutes as either Rich or Doctor Heilemann.

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

Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) Grants Available

Ms. Kolloff opened the discussion summarizing the difference between the two grants and the application process. The mini grant in the amount of $4,000.00 can be used for community outreach, hiring a consultant, mailing informational post cards and the like, Ms. Kolloff noted. Previous requests by the PC to the Board of Trustees to apply for grant funds proved unsuccessful, Ms. Kolloff added. An elected official or municipal employee may apply for the mini grant but not a PC member, so Ms. Towslee is the likely choice if approved by the Board of Trustees at their Regular Meeting Monday, August 7, 2023. Mr. MacLaurin asked if there are substantial recording requirements or if matching funds were required. Ms. Kolloff confirmed that there is no matching expense to the Village for the mini grant and that recording requirements and administrative work were minimal, but Ms. Kolloff requested additional time to evaluate the energy assessment grant details that she agreed to share at a later meeting of the PC.

Motion: To designate Ms. Towslee, representative of the PC, to apply for the MERP mini grant on behalf of the Village of Manchester if approved by the Board of Trustees. Made by Mr. MacLaurin, second by Ms. Kolloff. Approved unanimously.

Discuss DRAFT Manchester Village Land Use and Development Regulations

Ms. Hurley previously presented the draft of the Manchester Village Land Use and Development Regulations as an ongoing discussion and in conjunction with new State legislation signed by Governor Scott in early June. Ms. Hurley offered insight and recommended evaluating whether current zoning requirements align with existing housing and property inventory as an important first step noting that much of the legislative changes affecting municipalities in Vermont became law July 1, 2023.

Doctor Heilemann used online mapping available to measure the existing property setbacks on the west side of Main Street and the north side of Taconic Road as a preliminary review of current inventory of lots, setback, footprint, and otherwise versus existing zoning ordinances and existing bylaws. Doctor Heilemann opened the floor for discussion. Ms. Kolloff noted that evaluating current regulations coupled with the new state mandates has made an already overwhelming project even more so. Ms. Kolloff noted that impervious space or lot coverage includes buildings, paving, stone, parking, etc. BCRC recommended increasing impervious space or lot coverage far more substantially than current regulations.

Given that state law governs the ability to convert a single-family home into a two-family home, increasing housing in the Village without making any changes to Village regulations is notable, Ms. Kolloff offered.

After substantial debate and careful consideration, the members agreed to review one zoning district before moving to others. Zoning district Rural Residential 5 was the focus of discussion thereafter. Ms. Kolloff recommended that the current setback and other zoning standards remain status quo. Agreed to unanimously.

Understanding that future deliberation is necessary, motion to adjourn by Ms. Bronstein, second by Mrs. Kolloff at 12:25:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Towslee
Zoning Administrative Officer