



TOWN OF PORTSMOUTH PLANNING BOARD

2200 East Main Road
Portsmouth, RI 02871
401-683-3717

PORTSMOUTH PLANNING BOARD Special Meeting August 31, 2016

Members Present: Guy Bissonnette, Edward Lopes, Luke Harding, Michael James, Kathleen Wilson, Ryan Tibbetts and David Garceau.

Members Absent: none

Others Present: Atty. Kevin Gavin, Portsmouth Town Solicitor, Gary Crosby, Town Planner, Michael Asciola, Assistant Town Planner and Leon Lesinski, Administrative Officer, Portsmouth Planning Board

The Meeting was called to order by Mr. Bissonnette at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda Continuances/Modifications: none

2. Minutes for Planning Board Special Meeting of July 27, 2016

MOTION: Mr. Harding made a motion, seconded by Mr. Garceau to approve the minutes of the special meeting of July 27, 2016. All in favor. So voted. Ms. Wilson abstaining.

3. Close out approval of the proposed Economic Development Element (5) of the Comprehensive Community Plan

Mr. Crosby conducted a review of items within the proposed Element (5), Economic Development, which require Planning Board decision or action. He asked the Board members to use the July 27, 2016 special meeting minutes, which indicate those items, as an outline for the evening's discussion. He also explained that the August 31, 2016 draft of Element (5) indicates editing where language is deleted or edited and revised. The Planning Board heard and discussed each item and made the following conclusions:

Special Meeting Minutes, July 27, 2016, page 3

Element (5), Page 33

- Action ED – 3.3a – “Recommend hearing from CICCPC member on the controversial nature of the sea level rise issue and the possibility of removing reference to sea level rise from the Comprehensive Plan.”

The Planning Board accepted Mr. Crosby's recommendation to eliminate the following language, “Dedicate funding and seek grants to study...” and replace it with the term “Study...”

Element (5), Page 32

- Action ED – 2.5a – “Recommend deleting this action item.”

The Planning Board accepted Mr. Crosby's recommendation not to delete the action item entirely but to delete the term "Establish..." and replace it with "Investigate the establishment of..."

Element (5), Page 36

- Action ED – 5.2e – “Recommend replacing the language ‘Establish a Grant Coordinator who will monitor for...’ with ‘Investigate monitoring....’”

The Planning Board accepted Mr. Bissonnette's recommendation to delete the following language "Establish a Grant Coordinator who will monitor..." and replace it with "Investigate and monitor...."

- Action ED – 5.3e – “Recommend rewording as follows: ‘As long as the position of the Director of Business Development is maintained as a town employee, the position should advocate for existing and prospective businesses.’”

The Planning Board accepted Mr. Tibbitts' recommendation to reword the action item as follows: "The Director of Business Development shall lead advocacy for existing and prospective businesses."

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"Larry Fitzmorris, 50 Kristen Court presented his concern that the State of Rhode Island is "hostile" to small businesses as compared to Massachusetts, which puts Portsmouth economic development at a "substantial" disadvantage. He raised the question as to how to address this problem, in terms of state advocacy, within the Comprehensive Plan. He agreed to work with Mr. Crosby on developing language for the plan."

Mr. Crosby asked the Planning Board for advise on how to incorporate or address a statement submitted by Mr. Fitzmorris regarding business development in Portsmouth. The Planning Board agreed to the following changes:

Element (5), Page 36

- Action ED – 5.2d – Resolved to insert the following language at the end of the action item: "and address our competitive business disadvantages with our neighboring states."

Element (5), Page 35

- Policy ED – 5.1 or Policy ED – 5.2 - Resolved to insert the following language: "Seek to influence and streamline state mandated licensing and permitting regulation through Portsmouth's state delegation."

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"Tom Grieb, 110 Thayer Drive, raised his objections to language in the Economic Development Vision statement, page 28 particularly the words '...without compromising...' which he argued should be replaced with the word '...support...' He

read his lengthy visionary statement in which he advocates and recommends an alternative approach to economic development in the town.”

Element (5), Page 28

Economic Development Vision Statement – After discussion of Mr. Grieb’s statement, The Planning Board took the following action:

MOTION: Mr. Tibbitts made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lopes, to eliminate the language “...without compromising...” under the Economic Development Vision, page 4, Element (5) Draft, August 31, 2016 and replace it with “...to support...”. All in favor. So voted.

Mr. Crosby stated that the next element for review by the Planning Board is Housing. He suggested that the Planning Board forgo a workshop in September and that he would have the Housing element draft prepared for distribution to the Planning Board and the Citizens Interested in the Comprehensive Community Planning Process Committee, (CICCPPC) by October 1, 2016. He noted that the next workshop would on October 26, 2016. The Planning Board agreed with this scheduling recommendation.

At 7:44 p.m., a motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. So voted.

Respectfully submitted:
Dede Walsh
Recording Secretary for:

Leon Lesinski
Administrative Office