



MINUTES

Thursday – March 21, 2024

5:30 – 7:30 PM

GNAT – Sunderland, VT

Present: Walter Klinger, Jim Hand, David McAneny, John Rogers, Nick Zaiac, Dixie Zens, Ed Morrow, Andrew McKeever, Linda Schmidt, John Lavecchia Jr., Liz Ruffa, Michael Fernandez, Cat Bryars (on Zoom), Amy Tomasso (on Zoom), Jim Sullivan, Leslie Addison, Bob Zink, Della Zink, Ben Zink, Lilli West, Zak Hale,

BCRC Staff: Bill Colvin, Janet Hurley, Callie Fishburn, Jonathan Cooper, Scott Grimm-Lyon, Jim Henderson, Samantha Page, Dara Zink

Meeting was called to order at 6 PM

1. Minutes of the January 18, 2024 BCRC Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes by Dixie Zens, seconded by Nick Zaiac. Passed unanimously.

2. Homes for All Missing Middle Toolkit Presentation

Amy Tomasso from DHCD gave an overview of the new Homes for All Toolkit, which is a guide for small-scale development of missing middle housing in the state (see attached presentation). The toolkit focuses on the scale of 1–4-unit developments and addresses development in communities both with and without municipal water and sewer.

The toolkit is available on the ACCD website here: [Homes for All: A 'Design & Do' Toolkit for Small-scale Home Builders, Investors & Community Leaders | Agency of Commerce and Community Development \(vermont.gov\)](#) and there are a limited number of print copies at the BCRC available for viewing.

DHCD will be launching a small-scale developer learning cohort later this year to train new and prospective developers on the toolkit and provide some seed money to help them fund their projects.

3. Update on Housing and Permitting Legislation

Representative Seth Bongartz gave an overview of pending housing and permitting legislation. S.100 (the Home Act) which was passed last year, authorized 3 studies all of which inform H.687:

- Act 250 reform study
- Future land use study by RPCs
- Study of current designation programs

Components of H.687 as proposed:

- Act 250 governance reform – establishes 1A and 1B towns
 - 1A towns
 - Water and sewer infrastructure,
 - Robust zoning regulations.
 - Would be exempt from Act 250 – new housing development would be subject to local zoning.
 - 1B towns
 - Municipal water or sewer or soils that can handle a sewer system.
 - Have a town plan and some administrative capacity.
 - Housing up to 50 units could be exempt from Act 250.
 - New jurisdiction designed to protect critical natural resources for flood resiliency.
- Future land use maps – creates consistent land use categories across regions
- Outlines some exemptions to Act 150
- Streamlines state designation programs

4. Other Business

Michael Fernandez announced that the Bennington County Conservation District recently received a \$2.8 million grant for studying best practices for chestnut processing and improvements to an existing regional chestnut processing facility. Anyone interested in learning more about BCCD's agroforestry work should contact michael@bccdvt.org.

Please save the date for the following upcoming events:

April 23rd: Annual land use essentials training for municipal officials – 1 pm at the Manchester Community Library

May 16th: BCRC Annual Meeting at the Arlington Inn at 5:30 pm. The keynote speaker will be Ben Doyle from the Preservation Trust of VT.

Motion to adjourn by Dixie, seconded by Liz Ruffa. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM
