

Jamaica Planning Commission (JPC) – Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
April 5, 2021 7:00pm

* Meeting being held electronically pursuant to 1 VSA 312, including The Legislature's H.861 (2020) "Temporary Suspension of Designated Physical Meeting Location Requirements" Please visit JamaicaVermont.org for information on how to participate electronically in the video meeting.

1. Called the meeting to order at: 7:03 pm
2. Additions to the agenda: None
3. Approved the draft minutes of the March 15, 2021 JPC meeting
4. Mail received – no mail received of significance.
5. Update on the Jamaica Communications Committee initiatives
 - a Chris sent an email update to Greg and the JSB regarding the options for moving forward.
 - b CUD's can't make the decision without Select Board guidance as to whether to wait for more clarity or execute and begin spending the funds allocated: Go early or wait. (see the addendum below with Chris' email's key points)
 - c JSB will need to weigh in on which way to proceed.
 - d Senator Leahy and Sanders got the minimum funds within the last Covid relief bill which is a huge benefit to the State of VT.
6. Update on the Town Plan adoption
 - a Chris prepared a piece on the proposed energy plan for the Jamaica Journal.
 - b Process underway that requires notifying surrounding towns of our new Town Plan and also alerting our Town residents.
7. Sign Ordinance review
 - a John is creating clear table approach to clearly explain each signage category and the signage specifications and guidelines.
 - b Charlie Peck will then complete the revision.
8. Other business
 - a Marijuana voted passed but a petition is circulating for a re-vote to not allow for the resale of licenses granted to the original licensee.
9. Public concerns - no public present.
10. Calendar: The next regular JPC meeting is scheduled for April 19, 2021 at 7:00 pm
11. Meeting adjourned at: 7:28 pm

Chris Robbins email to the JSB dated 4/2/2021:

Heretofore DVfiber has been occupied with internal matters, establishing organization and operating procedures, business planning and preparation of the RFP for a

contractor(s) for a public / private partnership. Now, with the receipt of multiple viable proposals that represent a wide range of approaches to building an all fiber network, each with very different concepts of a public / private partnerships, we feel that it is essential that the approach we do take represents the wishes of the citizens of the CUD's region. Accordingly, we are asking for guidance from our respective Selectboards. The range of possible approaches are:

1. **Expeditious.** This would accelerate buildout and minimize capital costs to the CUD at the cost of reduced public control of future pricing and service policies. This approach will bring broad band service to everyone faster. But CUD governance powers would largely shift to the private partner.

2. **Deliberate,** paced by the rate at which capital can be raised. This approach as originally envisioned in our business plan would build the network at the rate that revenue from completed installations enables the issuance of revenue bonds to build more. Obtaining sufficient startup capital to build enough of the network to start a revenue stream is an issue as well as that pace at which this process can be sustained. It will take longer to bring service to all our homes but public control of the public / private partnership will be retained thereby ensuring DVfiber will be able to meet the commitments of our mission statement particularly regarding future pricing and service policies.

3. **Patient.** A bill providing major amount of funding for rural broadband development from money provided Vermont by the federal American Recovery Act is working its way through the legislative process. So far these funds are reserved for CUDs. Assuming that the bill gets enacted, the Public Service Board will have to write rules for grants or loans or before funds are to be made available to CUDs. When available, this funding should provide a significant amount of capital beyond startup needs. Further, we will be able to leverage these funds to raise the remaining capital to complete the project solely with CUD funding. This will allow us to both accelerate the buildout and retain control of the public / private partnership. None of this information was available at the time of RFP issue. If the Act is passed as currently structured, it is anticipated that bidders may wish to revise their proposals substantially. The cost of this approach is some remaining uncertainty in the final Act's content and delay in starting the project.