

Jamaica Planning Commission (JPC)
Draft Meeting Minutes - Regular Meeting
September 19, 2022
(as amended and approved at the 2022-10-3 meeting)

Jamaica Town Offices, 28 Town Office Road
Jamaica VT 05343

Commissioners present: Bryan Zieroff, Chris Robbins, Charlie Peck, Patrick McQuillen
Public present: Dave Marx, Heidi Pancake, Karen Ameden, Greg Meulemans, Greg Joly

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. No additions to the agenda.
2. The draft minutes of the August 1, 2022 meeting were approved as written by unanimous vote.
3. Charlie stated that he wants to call the JPC's and Selectboard's attention to the language on page 70 of the current Town Plan, which states: "The Town has developed a written policy on land acquisition by the Green Mountain National Forest. This policy provides that lands which are designated in the Town Plan for future, relatively intensive, development should not be acquired and that other lands should only be acquired if they are found by the Town to have "unique or highly significant resource value" or if the owner is willing to make a lump-sum payment to the Town to be invested to offset any reductions in property tax revenues received by the Town (Copies of this policy are available from the Town Clerk)". He commented on the origins of this policy, adopted by the Selectboard in the late 1980's, and on the so-called "Woodford plan", a practice, apparently formerly used by some Vermont towns, of requiring a private landowner desiring to sell land to the U. S. Forest Service to make a payment to the town in exchange for town support of the proposed public acquisition. Charlie stated that it has long been his opinion that this practice is of highly questionable legality, and that the entire policy is now very much out-of-date and no longer suitable for Jamaica's present day circumstances. There was consensus among JPC members that this issue is significant, and careful attention needs to be given to developing an entirely new policy and practice during the 2025 Town Plan update process. Until that is done, the JPC and Selectboard should remain aware that the policy cannot be applied because it cannot be located.
4. There was general discussion among JPC members and public present on issues related to the upcoming Selectboard public hearing on their proposed actions to reclassify or discontinue several Jamaica road and legal trail segments. Members of the Jamaica Area Mountain Bike Alliance (JAMBA) expressed concern that language in a conservation easement attached to one parcel of property within Jamaica State Park might have the unforeseen and undesirable effect of prohibiting future bicycle use on the TH 20/LT 10 corridor within the Park and Hamilton Falls Natural Area if the town were to transfer ownership of the corridor to the state, as proposed. This concern was noted by the JPC, and it was suggested that additional information on this issue may be provided at the upcoming public hearing by a representative of the VT Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation who is expected to attend. No action was taken.

5. Chris reported the following:

The planned presentation to the Selectboard reporting DVfiber's progress up to the important milestone of receipt a construction grant and commencement of construction activities was made and well received. This presentation will be reused with town specific edits for other CUD town reports. It has been used in Windham and Brookline thus far. Anne Connor deserves much of the credit for putting together this presentation that is useful to other CUD town representatives.

Resident survey activities have commenced in Stamford, the first town to be connected. Each residence in DVfiber towns must be surveyed to ascertain the connection requirements.

The pole certification effort GMP is performing for DVfiber's benefit includes replacing approximately 1600 poles that have degraded to the point that they will not be certifiable for an additional cable.

6. Work continues with the wastewater initiative, including the scheduling and/or completion of field work and office analysis. The 60% progress meeting is anticipated for early fall. .

7. No other business was brought up.

8. Members of the public present, several of whom had commented or expressed concerns on previously discussed issues, indicated that they had no further comment, and the meeting was adjourned.