

1 ESSEX TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

2 November 16, 2023

3
4 **PLANNING COMMISSION (PC) PRESENT:**

5 **IN PERSON:** Dustin Bruso, Chair; Jonathan Schumacher; John Mangan Georgia Lavigne; and
6 Alternate Paula Duke (a voting member for this meeting due to the absence of Commissioner
7 Perkins & Johnson.)

8 **VIRTUAL:** Josh Knox, Vice Chair.
9

10 **OTHERS PRESENT:**

11 **IN PERSON:** Katherine Sonnick; Kent Johnson, Planner; Town Meeting T.V.
12

13 **VIRTUAL:** Sharon Kelley, Zoning Administrator; Tim Doyle; Sharon Zukowski; Mark
14 (unidentified).
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16 Chairman Bruso called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.; and there were no changes to the
17 Agenda.
18

19 **AGENDA ITEM 1. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES:**
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21 **Chairman Schumacher MOVED and Commissioner Mangan SECONDED a Motion to**
22 **accept the Agenda as warned. The MOTION passed 6-0.**
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24 **AGENDA ITEM 2: PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.
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26 **AGENDA ITEM 3: TOWN PLAN PUBLIC HEARING:**
27

28 Katherine Sonnick provided a brief overview of the Draft Plan and provided a power point
29 presentation which included the following:
30

- 31 • Who has the authority to create a Town Plan and the elements the Town Plan should
32 contain, as follows: *Land Use Plan and Maps; Economic Development;*
33 *Transportation; Housing; Educational Facilities Plan; Energy; Flood Resilience;*
34 *Statement of Natural, Scenic, and Historic Resource Protection; Forest Blocks and*
35 *Habitat Connectors; Utilities and Facilities; and Maps.*
- 36 • How the Town Plan reflects what Essex can be and ways to achieve that goal.
- 37 • Overall themes including the following categories: *Development; Economic*
38 *Development; Conservation, Climate and Agriculture; Infrastructure; and Recreation.*
- 39 • Discussed how town plans are implemented through zoning regulations.
- 40 • She stated the Town Plan has an Introduction and the following Chapters: *The Action*
41 *Plan; Essex as a Community; How we Relate to the Lad; and Serving the Community.*
42

43 **Alternate Commissioner Duke MOVED and Vice Chair Knox SECONDED a MOTION**
44 **to Open the Public Hearing. The MOTION passed 6-0.**
45

46 Sonnick reported the next steps to get the Plan adopted, which includes the PC Public Hearing
47 tonight; a referral of the Plan to the Selectboard for its two Public Hearings and then to a Ballot
48 vote by the public.
49

Sonnick called out the few additional changes made to the Draft Plan as a result of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's (CCRPC) review and approval, noting that they were minor changes.

A brief question and answer period between staff, the public and the Commissioners.

Sharon Zukowski referred to Draft Plan, Chapter 1, under Economic Development, Line 387, which read, *Infill development within existing industrial and commercial zoning districts shall be promoted*. She questioned if the word "promoted" should be used this way as she felt this word gives a certain developer a way to appeal a denied application. The sentence was rewritten. The PC massaged the sentence to read better.

Commissioner Schumacher MOVED and Alternate Commissioner Duke SECONDED a MOTION to Close the Public Hearing. The MOTION passed 6-0.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CONSIDER APPROVING TOWN PLAN FOR SUBMISSION TO SELECTBOARD:

Vice-Chair Knox MOVED and Alternate Commissioner Duke SECONDED a MOTION approve the Draft Town Plan and move it to the Selectboard. The MOTION passed 6-0.

5. OTHER BUSINESS: None.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

PLANNING COMMISSION

By: _____
Dustin R. Bruso, Chair