

CALAIS PLANNING COMMISSION

June 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jan Ohlsson, Melanie Kehne, John McCullough, Gary Root
Guests: Denise Wheeler (Selectboard Chair), Larry Bush (Conservation Commission), Clare Rock (CVRPC), Richard Amore (Planning & Outreach Manager for Vermont **Designated Village Center**), Peg Bowen (DRB Chair & North Calais property owner)

ZOOM Meeting

- 1) Convened 7:00 p.m. via ZOOM
- 2) May 4th, 11th, and June 1st minutes accepted with changes.
- 3) Discussion of Designated Village Center (DVC) proposals for Adamant and North Calais:
 - a. Jan Ohlsson introduced the topic of **DVCs** with an open question about how the Planning Commission should look at the nature of a DVC's ostensible economic revitalization function as it pertains a largely residential center.
 - b. Richard Amore commented that DVC can enclose historically significant areas. It helps if these historically significant centers were once active economic centers.
 - c. Discussion turned to expanding the Adamant DVC to include the Adamant Community Club.
 - i. McCullough showed a gerrymandered DVC map where the Community Club parcel was connected to the existing Adamant DVC by a tenuous link along Martin Road. Richard Amore suggested that the Planning Commission work with Clare Rock at CVRPC to construct a better looking proposal.
 - d. Discussion turned to the new DVC proposed for North Calais Village.
 - i. Clare Rock noticed that the proposed North Calais DVC is outside the boundaries of the currently zoned North Calais Village District. Richard Amore commented that DVCs and locally Zoned Village Districts can be regarded as functionally different: DVCs do not have to be contained within Village District boundaries. They can exist outside Village Districts. McCullough commented that changes to the existing zoned Village District boundaries are being considered as part of a proposed rewrite of Shoreland District regulatory standards. This proposed change would probably enclose at least part of a new North Calais DVC.
 - ii. For the purpose of starting the conversation, McCullough presented a proposed North Calais DVC map which showed its boundary lines formed by the hair-pinning G.A.R. Road and North Calais and #10 Pond Roads. Richard Amore commented that the DVC should include all structures that had once been part of the vital "economic scene" that characterized North Calais Village in the 19th century, to wit, a residence on Upper Road that was once a general store should be included in the DVC. Amore also commented that the DVC should not include structures which were neither civic or commercial, nor are listed as non-contributory in the **North Calais Historic District** as found in the

National Register of Historic Places. Richard Amore suggested that CVRPC could help with mapping. He advised that DVC boundaries should try and follow property lines where possible.

- iii. Peg Bowen explained the miscellaneous tax map parcels found in the land just south of Memorial Hall to Richard Amore. There was some discussion regarding ownership of the “beach” on the western shore of the Memorial Hall peninsula.
 - iv. The Planning Commission will take another look at a North Calais DVC with regard to Richard Amore’s comments and with regard to any historic commercial or civic use of properties within a proposed North Calais DVC.
- 4) Discussion turned to scheduling of the public hearings required to move the DVC proposals along. Jan Ohlsson showed the schedule prepared by Zack Maia. This schedule will be shared with Denise Wheeler so that the Calais Selectboard is aware of the timing for all this.
 - 5) Discussion turned to Forest Integrity and how this gets folded in to the Town Plan to make it compliant with the requirements of Act 171.
 - a. Planning Commission reviewed amended language for the Natural Resources section of the Town Plan prepared by Gary Root with input from Eric Sorenson..
 - i. There was agreement that any maps developed to graphically define areas referred to in the Plan be “readable” such that the relationship between habitat blocks, connecting habitats, existing Zoning Districts, wildlife crossings, diversity blocks, etc. is apparent. If the final form of the map is on a single PDF, then it would have to include a way to toggle layers on and off. Also, all layers should be transparent enough so that underlying layers show through.
 - ii. Larry Bush asked about the data that the maps would represent. McCullough said the layers of interest to the Conservation Commission would be included: Interior Forest Blocks, Connectivity Blocks, and Physical Landscape Diversity Blocks.
 - b. It was agreed that the Calais **Natural Resources Inventory** be reposted on the Town of Calais website in a way that made it readily accessible.
 - 6) Melanie Kehne recapped recent work she had done on the River Corridor Overlay (RCO) and Flood Hazard Overlay (FHO) sections of the ongoing proposed Zoning Regulation amendments.
 - a. FHO references that had gradually insinuated themselves at various places into the Regs were ferreted out and checked for relevance to proposed changes to FHO and RCO.
 - 7) Next meeting on July 6 at the Calais Town Hall (yay!). Gary will bring treats.
 - 8) Meeting adjourned circa 9:10