

Town of Alburgh
Special Alburgh Selectboard Meeting
w/ Planning Commission
12/20/2022
Municipal Conference Room

Present: Donna Boumil, Elliot Knight, Shawn Creller, Josie Henry, Danielle James Choiniere, Erik Ramakrishnan, Matthew Lefluer, Tom Jacobsen, Brian Tjelta, Renee Creller, John Chesarek

Call to Order

Planning Commission Chair Donna Boumil called meeting to order at 6:59 PM and summarized what the Planning Commission has been doing lately, focusing on updating 2016's Town Plan as well as the town's Emergency Plan.

Planning Commission and the Town

Erik Ramakrishnan brought up New Markets Tax Credits, and similar state programs, incentivizing businesses to set up shop in less populated, rural towns. Spread the word and outreach to village businesses about tax credits from being in a village center designation.

Donna Boumil asked who will do this-- start a subcommittee like the town did with broadband and call it an economic advisory committee? John Chesarek mentioned TIF funds. The PC can work on which of their members could join the subcommittee at a future meeting of theirs. Donna can send out an email to members to get 3-4 interested people.

Josie Henry heard of a definition called 'forced codes' for downtowns to make them business only in absence of zoning. Donna Boumil asked about a priority list from the selectboard.

Elliot Knight spoke of middle group for common sense items like setbacks, lot sizes, etc. in village locations. And built off Tom Jacobsen's comment about presenting goals at Town Meeting in March—Town Meeting isn't always an accurate sample size of how residents will react (and vote) to change.

Josie brought up rail trail signage and the need for a town rescue headquarters separate from the fire department. The Bell property the town owns was one suggestion. She also mentioned the fire department's bingo hall and how its underutilized space for the community. If town residents are already paying for it via fundraising and tax money, why not expand its use for social services, youth center, meetings, etc. There's currently an exploratory advisory committee and PC members John Chesarek and Erik Ramakrishnan volunteered to help brainstorm.

Donna earmarked four focal points which had overlap: economic development, zoning, bingo hall exploratory committee, and recreation.

Planning maps done in 2018 were displayed about a hypothetical village area with parks, a pool, more parking, linked businesses, etc. While not all of these would bear fruit, some small changes could be implanted over time. The plans were done and paid for, may as well build on work already done.

Erik mentioned his experience with a facilitator in the town he lived prior, getting town ideas to the public. Matthew asked how to pay people to devote their time, and the board said it's volunteer based or minimally paid, though few one want to serve in community positions like road commissioner, animal control, etc.

Those in attendance picked Tuesday, April 11, to have a quarterly meeting with the selectboard.

Adjourn

➤ **Josie Henry motioned to adjourn at 8:25 PM. Erik Ramakrishnan seconded, all in favor. So adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Danielle James Choiniere

Zoom recording:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/pnjtb8qrt85TUbaVLqSgvIKQk5V_09wUQauBguFgy_hWKYiVpfdpFqZrHUG-NAD3.A5th8S2Dh5HxIDg?startTime=1671580983000

~~~ These are draft minutes not slated for approval until the next regular board meeting ~~~