

Craftsbury Planning Commission Meeting February 18, 2021
Draft Minutes

Present via Zoom:

Select Board members: Farley Brown, Linda Ramsdell, Annie Rowell, Annie Rowell, Ross Davis, Rudy Chase, Lucas and baby Maggie Schulz, Gordon Waterhouse, Emily Maclure.
Guests: Susan Houston, select board liaison; Carey Crozier, NEK Collaborative

Meeting called to order at 7:18 due some technical issues with Zoom

1. Approval of January 14, 2021 Minutes (3 minutes)

Annie moved to approve minutes of January 14, 2021. Emily seconded. Minutes approved.

2. Broader conversation about affordable housing: Carey Crozier, NEK Collaborative (20 minutes)

Carey Crozier is on the staff of the [NEK Collaborative](#). The collaborative just published the [NEK Recovery Action Plan](#). Housing is one of the focus areas of the plan. This includes the development of affordable housing in the Northeast Kingdom through broad partnerships with many housing focused initiatives regionally and at the state level. In task force meetings, the Collaborative heard that it is hard to demonstrate housing need in the Kingdom, and a further challenge is little demonstrated interest from developers. As a result, creating affordable housing in the NEK will require the involvement of municipalities and planning commissions mobilized by community groups and supported by the state. Private, community, and state investment will need to be aligned. The NEK Collaborative is working to fund an initiative for professional capacity building, recognizing that infrastructure projects of all kinds are heavy lifts for community volunteers. This prospective initiative would match project developers in different fields with communities.

Carey shared a document from VHFA. The secretary did not record the link, but believes it was the [Vermont Housing Needs Assessment 2020-2024](#).

Annie confirmed that it is tricky to quantify need and demand for affordable housing in Craftsbury.

3. Update on the Better Connections Grant: see draft language in January minutes (20 minutes)

Select Board signed off on the project on Tuesday, February 16th.

Gina emphasized that one of the most important aspects of the project is communicating with people who own property in the village, houses and businesses. Communicating with people and building transparency throughout the project are foundational. The application will be

submitted on February 19th, and we'll hear back in March and April. \$3000 is requested of the town on the Australian ballot.

Susie spoke to the hope that the town might one day be able to pay someone who would look for and write grants on behalf of Craftsbury.

Linda requested that discussions about safety encompass a broad understanding of safety. Rudy expressed that to be effective safety issues will need to be broken into smaller bite sized chunks. Annie suggested we could address both approaches to safety.

Discussion of parking in the village, more people parking in the road, especially to access trails. Linda will ask Lucas to talk with the Center about possible plans to create satellite parking.

Gordon will talk with Steve about addressing the planning commission with his perspective about parking.

4. Craftsbury Energy Plan confirmation hearing March 11th (5 minutes)

The energy plan never went through the NVDA required confirmation hearing. The **next planning commission meeting on March 11** will include this hearing.

5. Other Business

The town is still interested in the Sour property.

Respectfully submitted - Linda Ramsdell