

**MINUTES**  
**ST. ALBANS CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING ON SPECIAL DATE**  
**ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET**  
**5:30 PM TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2024**

*Approved March 18, 2024*

**Commission Members Present:** Denise Smith, Chair (Via Zoom); Ray Stahl; Dan Rohrbach; Janis Appel; Michael Gawne, Alternate.

**Commission Members Absent:** Carl Watkins, Vice Chair;

**City Staff present:** Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning and Development; Paul Olshan, Minute Taker

**Members of the public present:**

**1. D. Smith began the meeting at 5:30 PM.**

- No new attendees for introduction.
- No public comment.
- No additions or deletions to agenda.
- M. Gawne was a voting member for the meeting.

**2. Discuss 2025 City Plan Update “Input from Community Stakeholders” letter**

- C. Sawyer introduced the “Input from Community Stakeholders” letter for discussion. He discussed how it would be sent out and how the data would be collected.
- D. Rohrbach asked if the respondents would be included in the plan, and whether the Commission should be clear about including them. He was concerned about anonymity. M. Gawne added that anonymity might not be guaranteed but participants could be vaguely alluded to. There was a discussion on how to address this while sending out the letter. The Commission agreed to work on this issue when following up with respondents.
- C. Sawyer confirmed that there is another version of this that will go to other boards, commissions, and committees. M. Gawne began a brief discussion about sending this to the St. Albans Town Planning Commission.
- C. Sawyer shared the master list of potential respondents. Each member of the Commission discussed potential additions to the list.

### 3. Discuss 2025 City Plan Update: Neighborhoods Chapter

- C. Sawyer began the discussion on the Neighborhood chapter of the 2025 City Plan. He updated the 2017 list with recent discussions and additions that were presented by the Commission.
- There was a brief discussion about adding accessibility for the Programs and Activities section. J. Appel also brought up suggestions of where to fit in details on homelessness and the housing crisis in the City Plan. There was a discussion on how to address specific populations that are homeless or moderately housed due to recent changes in the housing environment. D. Smith summed this all up by highlighting the PC's role and to further research the "housing first" model to better support the community.
- M. Gawne asked about how this chapter should preemptively address any members of the public that might disagree.
- As the review continued, there was a brief discussion on form-based codes and the architectural style for residential districts.
- There was a discussion on the terminology commonly used, like "character and look of a neighborhood" and its possible association with systemic racism by zoning laws throughout the country. The Planning Commission explored explaining that somewhere in the City Plan.
- R. Stahl asked about where streets might be mentioned in the City Plan, and if it should be included in the neighborhood section. C. Sawyer clarified that this would be included in the Infrastructure and Public Service chapter.

### 4. Update on land use proposals in State Legislature

- C. Sawyer began a discussion on the status of a few bills (like S-311) in Montpelier right now. A few bills have local zoning mandates in them which were discussed. There is also a potential for St. Albans to be exempt from Act 250.
- D. Smith asked about stormwater and other considerations when making these changes. C. Sawyer mentioned that they're not considering it now.
- R. Stahl asked about what will be known by the next meeting.

### 5. General Business

- **R. Stahl motioned to approve the minutes from January, as presented. Seconded by D. Rohrbach. The motion passed with all in favor (M. Gawne abstained). No additional discussion.**
- Next meeting is March 18th at 5:30.

### 6. D. Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:23 PM.