

**Thetford Planning Commission
Minutes – September 16, 2008**

Present: Stuart Blood (7:15), Dennis Donahue (7:25), Lori Howard (7:20), Kevin O’Hara (7:25), Wayne Parks (Chair) (7:25)

Absent: Liora Alschuler, Laurie Burnham, Rick Howard

Guests: Mike Brown (7:35-9:24), Scott Zens (7:00-7:45)

7:25: Meeting called to order by Wayne Parks, Chair.

7:25: Public comment: None.

7:26: Review of prior minutes: Stuart Blood moved to approve as amended the minutes of September 2, 2008. Dennis Donahue seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

7:28: Zoning:

a. 7:28: Certificate of Occupancy:

Scott Zens, Energy Committee, explained that their proposal was to have Energy Compliance, along with Septic compliance on the COO or other paperwork, to show compliance with Energy Standards. He commented that he understands that septic approval is now covered by the State, and the State hopes to at some point have a compliance program for the State Energy Code. He hopes that the Town can at least have an educational effort regarding the energy code, and he would like to help with that effort. Wayne Parks noted that though the Planning Commission COO working group recommended against a COO requirement, they did recommend adding a notice on the building permit application that state law requires the Energy Certificate be filed with the Town. Zens said that he could provide supplementary material. Parks suggested he give it to the Zoning Administrator.

Dennis Donahue commented that there should be a clear statement of the Planning Commission’s position of the requirement that the Energy Certificate be filed with the Town, as a part of the Zoning Permit Application.

Mike Brown reported that the Attorney’s position on Septic, was that the Town Sewage Ordinance is obsolete, superceded by State law. The bylaws can put in the requirement that septic permits be submitted, in the Zoning Permit Application.

Motion by Stuart Blood that the Planning Commission recommend that the Zoning Permit Application should contain a clear statement about the requirement of the homeowner to file a certificate stating compliance with the Vermont Energy code, for some types of construction. Seconded by Kevin O’Hara. The vote passed unanimously.

Stuart Blood noted that the COO working group made a persuasive argument against a Certificate of Occupancy requirement, based on what would be required for enforcement.

Motion by Kevin O’Hara to not include the COO into the Zoning Regulations at this time. Seconded by Wayne Parks. The vote passed unanimously.

b. 7:53: Municipal Planning Grant:

Following discussion, motion by Stuart Blood that the Planning Commission defers an application for a Municipal Planning Grant for drafting subdivision bylaws, until the next grant cycle. Seconded by Dennis Donahue. The vote passed unanimously.

- c. 8:15: Solid Waste: Stuart Blood reported that Laurie Burnham re-wrote the section for clarity, and it is now a more succinct section, which they both recommend. He noted that the section maintains the core of the intent of the current regulations on landfills, and does not change any requirements to recycling centers, other than State requirements. The Planning Commission agreed to the change the language, noting that editing of format is still needed. The Commission thanked Blood and Burnham for their work.
- d. 8:20: Parking:
Stuart Blood reported that he and Dennis Donahue worked on the draft revision of Section 3.03, Offstreet Parking, with help from Norm Marshall of the Development Review Board.

The Planning Commission accepted the submission, as presented.

Stuart Blood will communicate language changes to Liora Alschuler for the tracking document.

The Planning Commission discussed how to proceed. Wayne Parks will ask Chris Sargent for a draft bylaw, as well as copies of current Zoning District maps, for the next meeting he attends.

The Commission reviewed the list of major issues remaining, and divided the issues among members, as follows. It was agreed that the individual assigned would define the issue, and recommend two or three solution options to present to the Commission for discussion. Then, if necessary, a working group could be formed to make a recommendation.

- Zoning District Lines: Wayne Parks
- Steep Slopes, Ridgelines: Dennis Donahue
- Historic Preservation: Lori Howard
- Habitat Protection: Kevin O'Hara
- Application Process: Liora Alschuler
- Setbacks: Rick Howard
- Wetland Buffers: Laurie Burnham
- PUD (& Unified Bylaw): Stuart Blood

8:55: Reports:

Selectboard:

Mike Brown reported that Suzanne Masland resigned from the Selectboard, and he is posting the vacancy.

Mike Brown reported that the Selectboard is beginning the budget process earlier this year. Departments and Committees will get a letter and worksheet this week, to put together their preliminary budgets. Brown explained that the hope is to finalize the budget by the end of December, instead of the end of January. Wayne Parks will put the budget on the agenda for next meeting.

9:10: Planning Commission vacancy: Wayne Parks will advertise the vacancy.

9:15: Old Business: The Planning Commission discussed a memo from Chris Sargent, with items needing to be reviewed, and recorded on the tracking document. It was suggested it be put on the agenda for next meeting.

9:24: New Business: None.

9:24: Motion by Stuart Blood to adjourn, seconded by Lori Howard. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Fenton, Recording Clerk, Thetford Planning Commission