

**Thetford Planning Commission  
Minutes – October 21, 2008**

**Present:** Liora Alschuler, Stuart Blood, Laurie Burnham, Lori Howard, Rick Howard, Kevin O’Hara, Wayne Parks (Chair)

**Absent:** Dennis Donahue

**Guests:** Mike Brown, Mike Fernandez (7:15-7:35)

7:15: Meeting called to order by Wayne Parks, Chair.

7:15: Public comment: None.

7:17: Review of prior minutes: Kevin O’Hara made a motion to accept the minutes of October 7, 2008. Seconded by Stuart Blood. The vote passed, with two abstentions.

7:20: Planning Commission candidate: The Planning Commission interviewed applicant, Mike Fernandez.

8:00: Zoning:

a. 8:00: Assignment Reports:

- 1.) Liora Alschuler: Application Process: Alschuler reported that her plan is to speak with the Development Review Board Chair and the Zoning Administrator to gather information.
- 2.) Rick Howard: Setbacks: Howard explained that current setbacks are 15 feet side and back, and 65 feet from the center line of the road to the front. He reported that he spoke about the front setback with Road Foreman, Doug Stone, who commented that his concern is that buildings are not in the right of way, for the purposes of run off/drainage, and snow removal. Howard suggested reducing the front setback to about 45 feet. He explained that it would be about equal to the three-rod (49 feet) right of way from the road centerline. He commented that it would give the landowner a bigger footprint to work with, but the landowner would usually only build close to the road if there were no other option. Stuart Blood noted the possibility of reducing the front setback as proposed, but making it a conditional use, based on run-off and snow removal. Also discussed was the possibility of reducing the front setback only in the village district. Parks noted that in some town zoning, the building cannot be set any closer to the road than the abutting neighbors’ buildings.
- 3.) Historic Preservation: Lori Howard: Howard reported that her plan is to talk to the Historic Preservation Committee.

b. 8:50: Working Group Reports:

- 1.) Zoning District Lines: Wayne Parks reported that the working group met. They compared the hand drawn maps the Listers use, and maps that Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission has; and determined that they do not match. Parks also reported that he discovered some additional maps, since the working group

met, that go with the overlays the Listers use. The group is working on getting enlargements of the TRORC maps. They will further examine the maps.

Wayne Parks reported that the working group is proposing changing the zoning district of a section of Post Mills along West Fairlee Road, which is currently Rural Residential, to Village Residential. The Commission plans to discuss further, and make a decision at their next meeting. Parks noted that if the Commission decides to propose this change, effected landowners would be notified.

9:10: Reports:

- a. Selectboard: Mike Brown reported that the Selectboard interviewed four candidates for their existing vacancy, and selected Cathee Daum Clement. There are three candidates for the Listers position.
- b. Two Rivers: Wayne Parks reported that Chris Sargent would attend Planning Commission meetings, every fourth or fifth meeting.
- c. Budget: Wayne Parks reported that the Selectboard received department and committee budgets, and have looked at as a total town budget. They will look at what departments and committees to request to come in, and their goal is to complete the budget by the end of December.

9:23: Old Business:

Fences: Stuart Blood commented that in building a grape arbor on his property recently, he realized a possible unintended consequence of the zoning requirements regarding fencing. Because his project is a permanent structure, and it has a fence higher than six feet, he applied for a building permit. In discussion, the Planning Commission considered if it is necessary to have a height restriction on fencing.

9:24: New Business:

November 4<sup>th</sup> meeting place: Wayne Parks announced that the November 4<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting will be in the Community Building (starting at the usual time of 7:15 p.m.), due to elections being held at Town Hall.

Wayne Parks asked the Planning Commission, for next meeting, to think about discussion items.

9:25: Motion by Rick Howard to adjourn, seconded by Stuart Blood. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Fenton  
Recording Clerk, Thetford Planning Commission