

**Thetford Planning Commission
Minutes – May 5, 2009**

Present: Liora Alschuler, Stuart Blood, Laurie Burnham, Lori Howard, Rick Howard (7:37), Wayne Parks (Chair), Ben Pershouse, Kevin O’Hara

Absent: Mike Fernandez

7:20: Meeting called to order by Wayne Parks, Chair.

7:21: Public Comment: None

7:22: Review of prior minutes: Stuart Blood moved to accept the amended minutes of April 21, 2009. Lori Howard seconded. The vote passed with two abstentions.

7:24: Review of Tracking Document: Stuart Blood moved to accept the amended tracking document. Lori Howard seconded. The vote passed with one abstention.

7:28: Review of Zoning Draft: Wayne Parks moved to accept the amended zoning draft. Kevin O’Hara seconded. The vote passed with one abstention.

7:30: Zoning Assignments:

1. Planned Unit Development:

- a. Language and implementation: Ben Pershouse reported that the towns of Norwich and Warren have language regarding “Farmhouse Clusters” and “Crossroad Hamlets”. In discussion Liora Alschuler commented that standards for village character are more nebulous than standards for natural resources, affordable housing, and energy efficiency, which are more apparent. Ben Pershouse will meet with Mike Fernandez, to further research and draft language, to send to the Commission for review prior to the next meeting.
- b. Standards for energy efficiency: Stuart Blood noted that standards already exist, as the Vermont Energy Standard, which is the default standard; and the Energy Star standard, which is a higher standard. He reported that he contacted the Energy Committee, and was invited to attend their next meeting to discuss PUD energy standards. The goal is to quantify the standards, regarding PUD incentive criteria.
- c. Protection of Wildlife Habitat: Stuart Blood distributed a memo from Brian Shupe, Sustainable Communities Program Director, Vermont Natural Resources Council, regarding draft language options. He noted that even without inventories and overlays, there could be a default position, which in some way would minimize or prevent fragmentation of core forest habitat. Kevin O’Hara and Stuart Blood will work on draft language for next meeting.
- d. Affordable Housing: Liora Alschuler reported that she would work on the assignment.

2. Mobile Home Parks: Laurie Burnham noted that she sent a draft to Commission members, and asked that it be reviewed for discussion at next meeting.

3. Wetlands: The following timeline was decided on: May 19: Review Laurie Burnham's report (early in meeting). June 2: Alan Quackenbush, State Wetlands office, will attend the Planning Commission meeting for a discussion of wetlands (also invite Conservation Commission). June 16: Planning Commission discussion. July 7: Milly Archer will attend the Planning Commission meeting for a discussion of wetlands regulations language.

Laurie Burnham will follow up with Alan Quackenbush, and Milly Archer.

4. Ridgelines and Steep Slopes: In discussion of whether to reopen the discussion of ridgeline regulations, Laurie Burnham requested that the Commission consider reviewing a set of regulations she reviewed. She noted that many towns have ridgeline regulations. In discussion, it was commented that there are obstacles, as discussed in prior meetings.

Stuart Blood moved to resolve the ridgeline regulation issue by deciding not to regulate ridgelines, and to move forward on steep slope regulations through the mechanism of regulating driveways and private roads. Kevin O'Hara seconded the motion. The vote passed, with one opposed.

5. Application Process/Site Plan Review: Liora Alschuler noted that in the timeline (of zoning regulation revision) that the Planning Commission has been working with, these assignments were set for late in the process and she commented that it is now an appropriate time to work on them. She will report back.
6. Driveways: Rick Howard noted that since ridgeline regulation is resolved, it would be appropriate timing for him to work on this assignment. He will report back.
7. Historic Preservation Overlay District & Memo to the THPC: Lori Howard will draft a memo as discussed, to be signed by Wayne Parks. She will distribute it to the THDC.

9:24: New assignments: Discussed above.

9:25: Discussion of establishing and maintaining a time table: It was commented that there needs to be a clear idea for each meeting, in regard to assigning topics in the prior meeting, and discussing them with speed; and there need to be goals and dates.

Stuart Blood distributed and reviewed a PUD timeline/project plan, which he drafted. The Planning Commission agreed with the timeline and plan. It was suggested that there be a project manager for each of the three remaining big issues as follows: PUD: Stuart Blood, Site Plan and Conditional Review: project manager to be determined.

9:45: Organizational Meeting: The Planning Commission decided to continue the current positions with no change, as follows: Wayne Parks, Chair; Stuart Blood, Vice Chair; Liora Alschuler, Clerk.

9:48: Selectboard Report: It was reported that the Selectboard has requested a joint meeting of the Selectboard, Development Review Board, and Planning Commission. Tig Tillinghast will provide more information.

9:55: Two Rivers Report: None.

9:55: Old Business, New Business: None.

9:55: 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