

**Thetford Planning Commission  
July 21, 2009 – Minutes**

**Present:** Liora Alschuler, Stuart Blood, Laurie Burnham (7:40), Lori Howard, Rick Howard, Kevin O’Hara, Wayne Parks (Chair), Ben Pershouse

**Guests:** Dave Fisk, Dale Gephart, Mark McMahon

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

7:29: Review of prior minutes: Rick Howard moved to accept the amended minutes of July 8, 2009. Stuart Blood seconded. The vote passed with one abstention.

7:30: Public Comment: Mark McMahon, Dave Fisk, and Dale Gephart reported on the progress of two projects of the Senior and Affordable Housing Committee, and asked the Planning Commission if they are considering proposing density bonuses for affordable housing. In discussion, the following points were made:

- Most towns offer density bonuses for affordable housing.
- The Senior and Affordable Housing Committee is conducting a market survey, which will help define affordability criteria.
- The reason for combining senior and affordable housing PUD is that State funding is available for large projects for senior housing.
- The Malmquist Mill project is being designed as clusters, with open land, some of which is in the flood plain.

7:55: Review of Tracking Document: Liora Alschuler moved to accept the tracking document. Laurie Burnham seconded. The vote passed with one abstention.

8:10: Review of Zoning Draft: No change.

8:11: Wetlands Draft Language: Laurie Burnham will email a draft next week for review, and discussion at next meeting.

8:12: General Standards Wildlife Habitat, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Stuart Blood and Kevin O’Hara reviewed the draft. Liora Alschuler recommended clarification of the last sentence. Stuart Blood moved to incorporate Section 6.03, as modified with an editorial rewrite, in the draft language. Kevin O’Hara noted the additional reference to flood regulation. The motion died for lack of a second, as it was noted that the Commission’s protocol regarding 1<sup>st</sup> reading, is to review, with the next step being the presentation of actual draft language for vote.

8:45: General Standards Forest Resources, 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Stuart Blood and Kevin O’Hara reviewed the draft. Discussion included the following points:

- Instead of the word “clustering”, “sited to avoid fragmentation” was considered.
- Definition of Wildlife Habitat is needed.
- Regarding #5: Delete term “forested”, because it could include other types of land.
- Trigger of review should be by standards/review by experts, rather than interested parties.
- Open space needs to be defined.

- The words “shall” and “should” were debated to proceed the phrase “have no adverse impact”. Stuart Blood will follow up with Brian Shupe, who provided the sample language, for his input on the recommended changes; and Stuart Blood and Kevin O’Hara will write a second draft for review at the next meeting.

9:30: Village Character: Discuss Objectives: Ben Pershouse distributed and reviewed a draft of objectives. He noted that the purpose is to address sprawl, but not to regulate architectural features. Ben Pershouse was assigned the drafting of a statement of purpose.

9:55: Reply Letter from the Historical Preservation Committee: Lori Howard reported that the Committee’s Acting Secretary William Thrane, agreed to the Planning Commission’s proposal regarding publishing appendix materials as a separate publication, but noted that the Committee does not have budget or time resources. It was noted that the file is available electronically, as “Appendix B”, to be cut out of the zoning regulations, and pasted into a new document.

10:03: Municipal Planning Grant Discussion: Wayne Parks reported that Two Rivers will help write the grant, even if the Planning Commission puts to bid the selection of a Planner. Wayne Parks will follow-up with Two Rivers.

10:05: Agricultural Land Protection: Tabled discussion.

10:06: Reports:

- Selectboard: Wayne Parks reported that recent Selectboard minutes note that the Selectboard has been discussing the timeline and content of the Planning Commission’s work, and that they want to be included in discussions.
- Two Rivers: Wayne Parks reported that Two Rivers has requested Thetford to host a workshop, for which they would do all the arrangements; on changes to Chapter 117, regarding zoning in conformity with the Town Plan, which will become law in 2011. The Planning Commission agreed to host, and proposed the date of September 29<sup>th</sup>. Wayne Parks will follow up.

10:11: Old Business, New Business: None.

10:12: Assignments for August 4<sup>th</sup> agenda: Wetlands draft language, Riparian Buffers Objectives; Mobile Home Parks: Laurie Burnham; Agricultural Land Protection: Working Group to meet; Definition of Village Character: Ben Pershouse; Update of timeline: Kevin O’Hara.

10:15: Laurie Burnham requested reopening the vote on the acceptance of minutes, to make editorial changes, since she was not present for the vote. Stuart Blood agreed to revote. Kevin O’Hara moved to accept the amendments proposed by Laurie Burnham to the minutes of July 8, 2009. Stuart Blood seconded. The vote passed with one abstention.

10:16: Motion by Kevin O’Hara to adjourn, seconded by Stuart Blood. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Fenton  
Recording Clerk, Thetford Planning Commission