

Thetford Planning Commission
August 3, 2010 – APPROVED Minutes

Present: Wayne Parks (chair), Kevin O’Hara, Lori Howard (arr: 7:35), Rick Howard (arr: 7:35), Dean Whitlock (Clerk)

Absent: Liora Alschuler, Stuart Blood

Guests: None

(Numbers below refer to agenda items)

1. There was no quorum at 7:15 PM.

2. Public Comment: None

Since there were not enough members present to constitute a quorum, the present members agreed to discuss informally a few items that did not require a quorum.

3. Review of Minutes of July 20.

Kevin O’Hara noted that he was not listed among the Absent and wanted to be sure he hadn’t fallen off the face of the Earth. Dean Whitlock noted his corporeal presence. Dean Whitlock reported that, after an email discussion initiated by Stuart Blood on item 6 in the July 20 minutes, he planned to rewrite another draft for review.

9. Professional Review of Zoning Draft

Kevin Geiger of the Twin Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) cannot make the suggested date. The next possible date that would include the entire Planning Commission would be 9/21. Wayne Parks will notify Kevin Geiger and ascertain that he can attend.

11. Time Line Review

The time line was adjusted to allow for the topics that would not be covered this evening due to the lack of a quorum.

12. Reports

a. Selectboard - Dean Whitlock reported on the special meeting called by the selectboard on July 29 to discuss visions of the future for Thetford’s villages. He had been able to attend through the end of the initial breakout sessions.

Lori and Rick Howard joined the meeting at 7:35. There now being a quorum, the meeting was called to order and returned to the published agenda.

3. Review of Minutes of July 20 (7:353)

The Howards offered no further changes. There was still not a quorum of those who had attended the meeting, so the updated draft will be reviewed for approval at the next meeting.

4. Review of Zoning Draft (7:45)

Wayne Parks referred to the email sent by Stuart Blood on 7/21 with the draft changes approved at the previous meeting. Kevin O'Hara moved that the changed sections be accepted; Lori Howard seconded. There was a brief discussion of exactly which sections were being included in this approval. The final vote to accept was unanimous.

5. District Uses Second Reading - Postponed till the next meeting in Liora Alschuler's absence.

6. Richard Blacklow's Memos (7:52)

a. Travel Trailers & Travel Trailer Camps - Lori Howard handed out her 2nd draft; there were no substantive changes since the previous draft. The commission still needs to resolve the issue of who landowners would notify when a travel trailer/camper was to be parked on their land. Lori Howard did not receive any feedback on this point from Richard Blacklow. After some discussion, it was suggested that the notification requirement be removed. No one contested the suggestion. Lori Howard will incorporate that change into the next draft, to be presented for approval at the next meeting. There was also discussion of the lot size and driveway widths for a Travel Trailer Camp and the definition of Travel Trailer Camp. No changes were suggested to the proposed language. Finally, she also proposed a definition of "permitted use", which is referred to frequently but never formally defined. Richard Blacklow has asked for clarification. There was discussion as to whether specific laws or sections of the bylaw needed to be referred to in the definition. Lori Howard will incorporate these comments as well and come back with a final draft for approval at the next meeting

b. Fences - Postponed until Liora Alschuler can attend.

c. Application, House Footprint - This was resolved at the previous meeting and the language was approved in the draft review (item 4).

d. Review of list - Wayne Parks went through the list of pending items. All have been addressed or are scheduled to be addressed in up-coming meetings.

7. Standards for Driveways & Private Roads (8:22)

Rick Howard handed out a set of standards, which were all based on the recommendations of the fire chief. They deal with width, steepness, and length, in that order of importance. The standards also cover a) bridges and spans (in reference to the weight of emergency vehicles), where the chief requests that a qualified engineer be required to inspect/approve the bridge/span; and b) curb cuts for access, which need approval either from the town road commissioner (for driveways off town roads) or VTRANS (off state roads). Rick noted that he needed to present this formal language to the chief for review.

There was a discussion on the need to cut and clear brush and trees to maintain the open width so emergency vehicles could pass without damage. This does not appear to be a zoning issue to be addressed specifically in the bylaw. There was also discussion on the language

regarding “slightly wider surface on turns and corners to allow room for large- long wheel based emergency vehicles.” It was suggested that the language was not clear enough to constitute an enforceable standard. Rick Howard will check to see if there are published road standards regarding widths on turns and curves. The same applies to the widths of shoulders required to allow snow removal from the travel surface. Rick Howard will incorporate the chief’s comments and results of his research and bring a new draft to the next meeting for possible final approval.

8. Red Text Update - postponed until Stuart Blood can attend.

9. Professional Review of Zoning Update (8:33)

Wayne Parks reviewed the earlier discussion for the Howards.

10. Meeting with Development Review Board (DRB) (10:04)

The DRB and Richard Blacklow can meet with the commission on 9/28 (all earlier DRB meetings are full). There will be one or two hearing items to start, then the Planning Commission discussion beginning between 8 and 8:15 PM, to take up the rest of the meeting.

11. Time Line Review (8:27)

Kevin O’Hara reviewed the previous discussion and updated the time line based on the items that were covered after the Howards arrived.

12. Reports (8:33)

a. Selectboard - Dean Whitlock repeated his report on the 7/29 meeting for the Howards. Wayne Parks read an email he had received from Tig Tillinghast regarding the lack of early notice about this meeting to the Planning Commission and his reply.

b. Twin Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Commission - Their review of the sections on Planned Unit Developments was not ready until late this afternoon. The discussion will be postponed until the next meeting.

13. Old Business (8:41): None

14. New Business (8:41): None.

The meeting was adjourned at the delightfully early hour of 8:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dean Whitlock, Clerk, Thetford Planning Commission