

**Thetford Planning Commission**  
**August 17, 2010 – APPROVED Minutes**

Present: Wayne Parks (chair), Stuart Blood, Kevin O’Hara, Liora Alschuler, Lori Howard (arr: 7:27), Rick Howard (arr: 7:27), Dean Whitlock (Clerk)

Absent: None

Guests: Richard Blacklow (8:20-8:27)

(Numbers below refer to agenda items)

1. Meeting called to order by Wayne Parks at 7:17 PM

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of Minutes of July 20 and August 3.

There was no quorum of members present at either previous meeting so review of the minutes was postponed till the expected arrival of the Howards.

4. Review of Zoning Draft (7:18)

There were no changes to the draft so there was nothing to review.

5. District Uses Second Reading (7:20)

Liora Alschuler referred to her email of 8/17 and provided handouts of the document it contained. She had incorporated all comments from the discussion of the first draft, except for the issue of the restriction of Maximum Lot Coverage to 20%. She has sent a question to the Twin Rivers Ottawaqueche Regional Commission (TRORC) asking why it is the same in all districts and how that value was obtained.

Wayne Parks asked if her second draft included dinosaurs as permitted or conditional uses. Stuart Blood pointed out that issue was resolved when the Development Review Board and Zoning Administrator made the judgement that the saurian in question was an accessory use, which is permitted. There was a brief discussion of the definition of “structure.”

Regarding the lists of permitted and conditional uses in the second draft under review, Stuart Blood said that he liked everything but one: in the sections on Dimensional Standards, under Minimum Lot Size, the proposed language specifies the “Maximum number of one or two unit dwellings” to be allowed on the standard lot size in each district. The current bylaw only allows one dwelling unit per lot, so this represents a doubling of the permitted density, which would be a substantial policy change. This elicited a lengthy discussion about how this would be interpreted in general.

Lori and Rick Howard arrived during this discussion.

Changing the permitted density affects Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), where density bonuses for affordable housing, energy efficiency, and natural resource protection are based on

the permitted density in each district. The proposed draft was intended to permit the building of a duplex without requiring DRB or PUD review processes; however, it would confuse the calculation of density bonuses. There were a number of changes suggested to the format of the Dimensional Standard table to make them more clear. There was also a discussion of the need to provide clear definitions of “dwelling” and of “dwelling unit” and to refer to them in the sections on uses. Liora Alschuler, Stuart Blood, and Kevin O’Hara will draft language that will allow a duplex to be a permitted use without affect PUDs. Stuart Blood will pose the question to TRORC. The next draft will be read at the next meeting.

#### 6. Richard Blacklow’s Memos (8:02)

a. Travel Trailers & Travel Trailer Camps - Lori Howard referred to her email of 8/17 and distributed printed copies of her third draft, which incorporated the suggested changes from the previous discussion. At the time she composed this draft, she had not yet received a review from Richard Blacklow (Zoning Administrator); however, she found his marked-up review on the table. She read his review to the group. There was some discussion of the terms “resident”, “owner/renter”, and “property owner” as the person who can invite guests to park a travel trailer/camper on the property. Wayne Parks proposed amending the text to “property owner”. There were suggestions made to remove the extraneous text describing the conditional use process, which is described in that section of the bylaw. Richard Blacklow had also pointed out that the name of the state agency regulating drinking water and septic had changed. There were also suggestions made to clarify the definition of Travel Trailer Park/Campground.

Richard Blacklow joined the meeting.

There was further discussion of his comments and the difference between a “mobile home” and “travel trailer” as defined in the proposed language. Wayne Parks moved to accept as final sections 5.08, 5.09, and the proposed definitions as edited and with the two corrections to the name of the state health agencies, but not including the definition of “permitted”. Rick Howard seconded and it passed unanimously.

Richard Blacklow left the meeting.

b. Fences - Stuart Blood pointed out that the technical corrections of section 3.01 by TRORC covered this topic and suggested postponing discussion till that item in the agenda.

c. Review of list - Wayne Parks went through the list of pending items. All have been addressed.

#### 7. Standards for Driveways & Private Roads (8:34)

Rick Howard referred to his email of 8:17 and provided the proposed driveway standards, which incorporated the changes discussed at the previous meeting. He reported that he had reviewed the earlier language with the fire chief, who approved all of it except the section on bridges. The chief said there was a particular specified type of bridge that would support emergency vehicles. The chief will find the name of the type and provide it to be included in the language.

Regarding the proper radius for curves, the chief said that there was no set formula, but that having a full 12-foot surface plus shoulders should be enough. The chief said that, if that was too vague, the mention of curves could be struck from the language. Kevin O’Hara asked about the

sentence requiring inspection by an engineer. He suggested adding language specifying a structural engineer licensed by the state of Vermont. Stuart Blood suggested replacing “should” with “shall” in the sections on steepness and length. Stuart Blood will incorporate the suggested changes and place the language at section 3.13 in the draft bylaw. Rick Howard will get the correct bridge type and carrying weight from the chief and relay it to Stuart.

Wayne Parks moved that the proposed standards be accepted as edited; Stuart Blood seconded, and it passed unanimously.

#### 8. Red Text Update (8:52)

Stuart Blood reported that all of the red text in article 6 had been approved and will be forwarded to TRORC for their professional review.

#### 9. Professional Review of Zoning Update (8:53)

Under discussion was Article III. Stuart Blood suggested that the commission focus on the technical corrections proposed by TRORC, because all of the policy issues raised in the review had already been discussed in previous meetings. There followed an item-by-item discussion of each of the comments and corrections. Two amendments were suggested in section 3.03 (Offstreet Parking), removing contradictory language and excepting one- and two-unit dwellings.

Stuart Blood moved to accept the technical amendments to Article III proposed by TRORC with the changes discussed; Kevin O’Hara seconded. Wayne Parks raised a final question regarding an insertion in Section 3.11 (Existing Small Lots) that would set minimum area and dimensions for these lots. Stuart Blood explained that Title 24, Chapter 117 of the Vermont Statutes allowed the town to have such provisions to allow grandfathered lots that no longer met zoning requirements. Wayne Parks pointed out that the planning commission had discussed this issue previously and decided to allow such lots without restrictions, since they had been created legally. There was a brief discussion. Wayne Parks proposed to amend Stuart Bloods motion by removing the insertion of the language from the state statute. Rich Howard seconded. The amendment passed unanimously; then the motion also passed unanimously.

#### 10. Meeting with Development Review Board (DRB) (9:19)

The meeting has been arranged for 9/28. Two items will precede the DRB/Planning discussion. Wayne Parks will notify the members of when to arrive as soon as he knows it.

#### 11. Time Line Review (8:27)

Kevin O’Hara reviewed the previous discussion and updated the time line based on this meeting’s successes. There was a brief discussion of the process for selectboard review of the draft. Stuart Blood will prepare the agenda for the next meeting, as Wayne Parks will be absent. He then reviewed the time line in regard to the review schedule arranged with TRORC.

#### 12. Reports (9:27)

a. Selectboard - None.

b. Twin Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Commission - Wayne Parks reviewed an offer from Pete Fellows regarding funds available outside of the established professional review schedule.

3. Review of minutes of minutes of meetings of 7/20/10 and 8/3/10 (9:29)

Stuart Blood offered one amendment and several corrections to the 7/20 minutes. These were accepted and the minutes were accepted as amended, with Kevin O'Hara abstaining since he had been absent.

There were two corrections made to the 8/3 minutes, which were then accepted as amended, with Liora Alschuler and Stuart Blood abstaining since they had been absent.

13. Old Business (9:37): None

14. New Business (9:37): None.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dean Whitlock, Clerk, Thetford Planning Commission