

Thetford Planning Commission
June 18, 2013 – DRAFT Minutes

Present: Kevin O’Hara, Patrick Kearney, Michael Schunk, Dean Whitlock (Recording Clerk)

Absent: Patricia Norton, Liz Ryan Cole

Guests: None

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of the Minutes of 6/4/13

The minutes were accepted as corrected.

4. Selectboard report: None

5. Town Plan

a. Process for bringing draft chapters forward for wider review (7:21) - Dean read the section of the minutes for the 3/5/13 meeting when this topic had first been discussed. This suggests that draft chapters available for public review be posted on the town web site and announced, with a link, on the town list serve. The Town Clerk will also have a copy of the latest PDF files, so she can print copies for individuals who come to her office to request them.

Kevin noted that several chapters were very close to being ready for wider public review: Transportation, Scenic Resources, Relationship to Regional Plan, and Implementation. A couple of others are close, including Utilities/Facilities/Services. Michael said the Energy Chapter was almost ready for a final review by the members before seeking wider public review. First he needs a review by the Energy Committee of the changes made at the last Planning Commission review; however, he will not be able to attend the next meeting. Patrick said that his chapters (most of those in Kevin’s first list above) should have one last review by the commission.

Kevin recommended that the versions made available on the town web site and through the Town Clerk for public review should have a filename that includes the date of the revision, and that the date should also be included on the header or footer on each page. The pages should also have a watermark that says draft. The documents shouldn’t be marked “final” until they are formally adopted by the commission after being updated with changes that come out of the warned hearing. Kevin also recommended that, along with the PDF copies of each chapter that is available for public review, we also post a list of all of the chapters in the Town Plan, indicating which are ready for review and which aren’t yet available, pointing out that the chapters will probably not become available in the order of the Table of Contents. Copies should also be sent

to the Selectboard liaison, the regional planning commission, the Zoning Administrator, and appropriate town committees (e.g., Natural Resources chapter to Conservation Commission).

There was a brief discussion about formally inviting members of affected committees to the warned hearings and also to any Planning Commission meetings where the chapters related to their work were on the warned agenda.

The members then discussed what still needed to be done to get the Energy, Transportation, and Utilities/Facilities/Services chapters ready for public review. Before the next meeting, Patrick will send copies of his chapters that need a last commission review.

b. General discussion - photos, editing, other assignments - This item was tabled until more of the members could be present.

c. Utilities, Facilities, and Services - Kevin: Referring to the version he had emailed on June 14, Kevin reported that he had incorporated the changes discussed in the last meeting. They were quickly reviewed one last time by the members, who then moved on to review the remaining Goals, Policies, and Recommendations. Almost all of these had come directly from the current Town Plan. Several could be removed because they had already been acted upon (for example, setting up a town emergency shelter). Others were moved to more appropriate chapters or were cross-referenced. There was a lengthy discussion of the proper way to rephrase and refocus the goals under Fire & Emergency Services to better match the remaining policies and recommendations. Some other recommendations could now be listed as policies due to actions taken by the town since the current plan was written.

6. Old Business (9:15)

Kevin noted that the letter requested by the Vermont Land Trust to indicate approval of the Taylor land conservation project would go out the next day.

7. New Business

There was a brief discussion of a memo sent to the Planning Commission, the Zoning Administrator, and the Development Review Board by the Thetford Hill Historic Preservation Committee regarding the new manual of development standards they had created for the Thetford Hill Historical Preservation District, at the request of the Planning Commission. Their specific request to the Planning Commission is final verification of the original request and “agreement for the development” of their manual. Kevin will notify the Selectboard and other parties of the commission’s verification and agreement. The manual will be cross-referenced in the Land Use chapter of the Town Plan and eventually in the next revision of the Zoning By-Law.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dean Whitlock, Clerk, Thetford Planning Commission