

Thetford Planning Commission
July 2, 2013 – APPROVED Minutes

Present: Kevin O’Hara, Patrick Kearney, Patricia Norton, Liz Ryan Cole, Dean Whitlock
(Recording Clerk)

Absent: Michael Schunk

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 6/18/13

The minutes were accepted as corrected.

4. Selectboard report: None

5. Town Plan

a. Review Patrick’s chapters for draft publication - The chapters that pass review will be made available for public review. Patrick started with the Implementation chapter, pointing out the one change that had been made since the last revision. Liz asked a question regarding the planning process and the requirement for reviewing and rewriting or readopting every five years. It was clarified that the five-year review was mandated by state law for all towns that had town plans. In the review of the chapter, the commissioners noted two other minor changes to make for readability. It was also recommended that the new material summarizing the nature of the changes to the plan be moved to the Introduction. The sense of the meeting was that the Introduction would be the better location, and the new material would be reviewed again when the Introduction was on the agenda. With these few changes, the chapter was determined to be ready for public review.

The Scenic Resources chapter was next. There were only a few changes since the last review of the chapter; however, new points of discussion were identified. Dean suggested removing one sentence that was redundant. The Design Considerations section needs to be clarified, particularly around the Planning Commission’s role. There was considerable discussion of the section on ridgeline development, the need to include visible hillsides as scenic resources, and the difficulty of addressing aesthetic issues. Patrick will check with Liora Alschuler regarding comments she had made about it at an earlier meeting. He will also cross-reference the Telecommunications Bylaw, which was written after the current plan was first adopted. The sense of the meeting was that this chapter would benefit from before-and-after photos, if any are available, in order to illustrate the effects of development on scenic resources. Patrick will

research how a few of our neighboring towns have dealt with this chapter and rewrite. This chapter is not yet ready for public review.

The Transportation Chapter was next. Patrick started with a discussion of information about revenues and expenses that had just been supplied by Tig Tillinghast. There was a discussion about how much data was necessary and where would be the best place to include it. There was also considerable discussion of the content relating to non-motorized means of travel, primarily trails and paths for walking and bicycling. Finally, several of the policies and recommendations needed reworking. This chapter will also need one more review before going public.

b. Land Use Review - discussion of this chapter was postponed.

There was a brief discussion of the process of posting the chapters to the town web site. Dean will be able to do that once the chapters are ready and have been sent to him in PDF format. He will send the PDF to the Town Clerk so she will be able to provide copies if requested. He will check with her about the process of creating hard copies for people who request them. He will draft an announcement to be posted on the town list serve and sent to the Selectboard, regional planning commission, and concerned town committees. The letter and formatting questions will be discussed at the next meeting. Scenic Resources, Land Use, and Energy will also be on the upcoming agenda.

6. Old Business

Kevin said that the Subdivision Regulations Workgroup would be wrapping up their activities at one more meeting, after which the draft regulations would be presented to the Planning Commission for the final review and adoption stages.

7. New Business: None

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dean Whitlock, Clerk, Thetford Planning Commission