

**Thetford Planning Commission**  
**December 16, 2014 – APPROVED Minutes**

Present: Kevin O’Hara, Patricia Norton, Michael Schunk, Liz Ryan Cole (arr. 7:29), Dean Whitlock (Recording Clerk)

Absent: None

Guests: None

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of Minutes from the 12/2/14 meeting.  
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report: None.

5. Town Plan (7:25)

a. Energy Chapter Changes - Michael referred the group to the latest revision, which he had emailed to the planning listserv that afternoon. The changed text was in blue highlighted paragraphs. The first major change was on the first page of the introductory narrative and was an addition based on comments made by Scott Zens. The commissioners opened the comments file to refer to the original comments, which addressed concerns among residents about detrimental local effects of local renewable energy projects, and the need to balance those concerns against the detrimental global and local effects of producing the energy elsewhere, whether by renewable or fossil-fuel-based sources.

Liz Ryan Cole joined the meeting.

There was a long discussion of the best wording to insert, with several variations proposed. Patricia made notes in the document for Michael to refer to in preparing the final revision.

Other items discussed were the need to find sources for several statistics comparing the proportion of costs and profits for fuel wood that stay in the community versus non-renewable fuels. Michael will search for the sources and try to confirm the validity of the statistics.

Other changes including an update to the number of solar photovoltaic sites in Thetford, added text comparing the minimum energy standards in the state codes with the high efficiencies possible through building programs like “Net Zero” and “Passive House,” and rewording or addition of policies and recommendations about transportation efficiency, municipal adoption of energy conserving practices, and encouraging developers to use higher energy standards than the state’s minimums. Michael will present the final revision of the draft chapter at the next meeting.

b. Editors - who and how to select - Kevin and Dean both provided names of potential copy editors to correct and format the final draft prior to the public hearings. Dean will contact Stuart Blood and Liora Alschuler for other recommendations. He will also prepare a first draft of a Request for Proposal (RFP) to send to the list in early January, with a start date as soon as the first chapters are ready. Based on the proposals submitted in response to the RFP, the commission will interview the applicants and check references, with the goal of choosing the editor by early February. The current Town Plan will be used as the template for formatting and layout of the new one.

c. Warning process review and items we still need to update - Kevin briefly reiterated the process for warning. The items still needing update are:

Appendix A, preservation tools. Michael will contact the Thetford Hill Historic Preservation District Committee to confirm that the appendix is still appropriate to include.

Maps. Dean will contact the regional planning commission to get samples of the maps they are able to produce.

Photos. All members will find photos for their chapters. It was noted that photos, along with graphs and other figures, help to keep people reading. One for every 2 or 3 pages would be a reasonable number. There was a brief discussion of appropriate photos for the Historic and Scenic Resources chapters. Dean will contact the Thetford Historical Society and some landowners with scenic views.

## 6. Subdivision (9:15)

a. Open Space Definition. Liz referred the commissioners to a detailed draft definition for Open Space that she had emailed just prior to the meeting. She also included a very brief definition from the Environmental Protection Agency, but the commissioners agreed that it wasn't appropriate to Thetford. There was a discussion of the longer definition. Some of the details weren't appropriate to Thetford (reference to estuarine and coastal areas, for example), and members suggested slight changes to the wording. Liz will present a final version at the next meeting.

b. Section 3.6, Roads and VTrans standards – Dean reported that he had sent the Road Standards section to the Thetford Public Works Commissioner, Scott Knowlton and is trying to schedule a time to discuss them together.

## 7. Other Business (9:28)

Kevin proposed that the comments document be posted on the town website (as had been done with comments for the Zoning Bylaw). Patricia will review the document to confirm that all of the comments have been addressed and then will send the final version to Dean to post on the web site.

Liz reported that the planning workshop she attended had provided her with very useful information. She will write up a full report to send to the commissioners.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dean Whitlock, Recording Clerk, Thetford Planning Commission