

Thetford Planning Commission
February 17, 2015 – APPROVED Minutes

Present: Kevin O’Hara , Patricia Norton, Michael Schunk, Liz Ryan Cole (7:23-8:08), Dean Whitlock (Recording Clerk)

Absent: None

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 Minutes from the 2/3/15 meeting.
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report: None.

5. Town Plan (7:23)

b. Appendix A, incorporate into chapters - (Item a. was postponed until the arrival of Liz Ryan Cole.) Dean referred the members to the two chapters that he had emailed to the planning listserv the day before. He reported that he had copied most of the preservation tools into the Historic Resources Chapter, with one section going into the Scenic Resources Chapter. He explained that Michael had not yet verified that all of the tools were still available. Liz Ryan Cole joined the meeting. The members read through the insertion in the Scenic Resources Chapter first because it was shorter and was also a program created by Vermont statute so unlikely to have been discontinued. There were a few changes for rewording, which Dean noted to make in the next revision. (Discussion continued later.)

a. Education Chapter final draft revision - Liz referred the members to the latest draft, which she had emailed on February 9. She pointed out the sections on Governance and Thetford Academy, which had been changed with input from Charlie Buttrey (member of the Thetford School Board) and William Bugg (Head of Thetford Academy). There were several suggestions made to reword the new text, which Liz incorporated into the draft. There was a brief discussion of the given numbers of domestic tuition students and exchange students. Dean moved to accept the draft of the Education Chapter as revised during the meeting. Patricia seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0. Liz will mail the final draft to Patricia to reformat and then send to Dean to place in the file of chapters ready for copy-editing. Patricia will also finalize the notes on resolution of education comments in the Comments Document and will send it to Dean to post on the Planning Commission page on the Thetford web site.

b. Appendix A, continued - The members took a quick look at the inserted pages in the Historic Resources Chapter. Michael reported that he had found two new resources to add: a document that specifies best practices for energy upgrades to homes in historic districts, and a grant available to municipal governments for projects in towns that have certified historic districts or structures. Because some of the others need to be verified, the topic was tabled until the next meeting, when Michael will have had a chance to verify them.

c. Review land use maps - Dean displayed the contour map without photo background, which all agreed was more readable. He again attempted to explain the difference between the “current land use” map, which shows actual parcels, house sites, and other details but does not usually show the defined land use areas, and the “future land use areas” map, which shows the approved land use areas but not the parcels and other details. Patricia pointed out that, in the current Town Plan (2007/2012), these maps are named “Parcel Information” and “Land Use,” respectively. Dean noted that this was because these maps had been created by Heather Carlos instead of the regional planning commission. She is not available to redo the maps. All agreed, however, that the names used by the regional planning commission are confusing, and Dean will ask them if we can use the names we have now.

d. RFP responses and photos - Dean reported that he had received one proposal by the deadline and one email saying that the editor would not be able to submit a proposal. After a brief discussion, it was decided that he would contact the other three editors and verify that they were not interested in submitting a proposal, or had not already submitted a proposal that was somehow lost in transit.

There was a brief review of the need for finding good photos. Patricia was cajoled into creating a request for photos to post on the listserv. The other members will send her a brief list of the photos or types of photos they are looking for, as the basis for her announcement.

6. Subdivision (9:15)

Kevin went over the Open Space definition and the Lot definition and made some wording changes. There was a long discussion of the term Sketch Plan and how it is used in preliminary discussions with the DRB. A place was found to reference it properly in the narrative.

Dean went over the additions to the Road Standards, which he had copied in from the Windsor regulations and adjusted to Thetford’s situation. He will discuss his new draft with the Zoning Administrator before the next meeting.

7. Other Business

1. Kevin gave a brief report on the forum about E. Coli pollution in the Ompompanoosuc River. He referred the members to a good article on the meeting that appeared in the Valley News on Sunday, February 8.

2. The Thetford Town Meeting is on Saturday, February 28th, and Town Meeting Day is March 3rd. The Town Hall will be used for voting, so we will need an alternate place to meet.

Patricia will reserve the meeting space at the Latham Library.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

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