

**Thetford Planning Commission**  
**April 21, 2015 – APPROVED Minutes**

Present: Patricia Norton (acting chair), Michael Schunk, Liz Ryan Cole, Dean Whitlock  
(Recording Clerk)

Absent: Kevin O’Hara

Guests: Jessica Eaton (Selectboard liaison)

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Patricia called the meeting to order at 7:18.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of the minutes from 4/7/15

Kevin had emailed a comment, which Dean read. After brief discussion, the minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report: Jessica reported on the meeting hosted on April 16 by the Two Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Planning Commission (TRORC) to discuss proposed changes to the regional plan. The regional commission has been updating chapters in sections, so this did not cover the complete plan. The representative from Hartford had quite a number of comments and complaints to put forward. Jessica said she didn’t see anything to complain about. Patricia noted that the new Thetford Town Plan being developed now by the Planning Commission must be approved by TRORC and be compatible with their regional plan if Thetford is to be considered for certain state and federal grants that support planning, zoning, and development activities.

5. Town Plan Discussion

c. Flow of Town Approval Process - Patricia moved this item up so that Jessica could leave afterward if she didn’t want to stay through the discussion of the current draft text and photos.

Liz suggested a change to the wording on the Planning Commission page of the Thetford town web site. The earlier drafts are no longer available for downloading since most of them have been changed in response to comments received. She proposed better wording about when the next draft would be available. Dean pointed out that the earlier drafts were still available in hard copy from the Town Clerk’s office. There was a brief discussion of the wording, and Dean will revise the page.

Dean noted that the final draft will be posted at least 30 days before the warned hearing, because that is the warning period. There was a discussion about the need to have the new draft reviewed first by TRORC and the Selectboard and to incorporate their comments into one more draft before warning the hearing. None of the present members were certain about what were required steps after the hearing. Dean said that, if the comments from the hearing required

substantive changes, there could be a second warned hearing. He said it was his understanding that, once the Planning Commission has a final, approved draft, they will present it to the Selectboard. The Selectboard has the options to approve it as is, make changes and hold a warned hearing, or call for a vote by the full town. Dean said he also thought that residents could petition for a town-wide vote if the Selectboard chose not to hold one. Patricia asked him to confirm this with Kevin.

There was a brief discussion about collecting more comments before the warned hearing.

a. Read through draft 2 and respond to comments - Patricia led the group through further review of the version that had been copy-edited, to discuss the editor's comments and accept or reject suggested changes (other than corrections to grammar, spelling, and punctuation). The discussion started in the Housing Chapter, at the point where the review had left off at the previous meeting (the section on Affordable Housing). After completing the Housing chapter, the review continued to the Education chapter. There was a long discussion about the section on Governance, and part of the text was moved to the separate sections about the elementary school and Thetford Academy. The review continued to the end of the Education chapter, at which point Patricia ended the session due to the late hour. Patricia expressed her disappointment that the review was taking longer than she had anticipated but said she hoped that a draft would be ready for the Selectboard to review by the end of June.

b. Photos - discuss: Postponed till a later meeting. Patricia reminded the group to send photos by email or via Dropbox before the next meeting.

6. Subdivision - Postponed to the next meeting. Dean reported that there was a mix-up in the files being sent back and forth, which must be resolved before the update can proceed.

#### 7. Other business

Dean reminded the group that both he and Liz will not be able to attend the next meeting. Because the review of the new revision was taking so long, he suggested that a meeting be scheduled for the following Tuesday. There were other conflicts with that date, so Liz suggested that the next regularly scheduled meeting be started one hour earlier. She offered to host it at her house if the Town Hall wasn't available at that time. Patricia said she would check with Kevin before deciding.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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