

**Thetford Planning Commission
January 19, 2016 – APPROVED Minutes**

Present: Kevin O’Hara, Patricia Norton, Jason Crance, Michael Schunk, Jamie Thaxton, Dean Whitlock (Recording Clerk)

Absent: Liz Ryan Cole

Guests: Jessica Eaton (Selectboard liaison – arr: 7:50)

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of the minutes for the 1/5 meeting
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report: None

5. Town Plan (7:22)

a. Cemetery update and Gillette Swamp name confirmation – Kevin reported that neither he nor Jessica had received a response from the Cemetery Commission so we will produce the final draft with the current text unless someone speaks up by the end of the public hearing.

b. Update on Maps and the copy editor’s schedule (Patricia)

Maps – Dean reviewed the emails received on January 10 from Pete Fellows of the regional planning commission (TRORC). In them, Pete said that it would take a couple of weeks to prepare the maps once he had our final format decisions. He also pointed out that maps 4, 6, and 7 could be combined. These are Slope, Natural Resources, and Water Features, respectively. The commissioners looked at the current maps in the printed 2013 Town Plan and on the TRORC web site (<http://www.trorc.org/towns/thetford/>). They also looked at maps used in other town’s plans. Dean reminded everyone that the current maps use an aerial photo as a background but this will be removed in the new versions to make the land use and other details easier to see. There was a long discussion of the best layout to use and which maps could be combined without creating too much visual confusion. Patricia pointed out that we didn’t need to show all slope areas, only the steep and very steep classes of slope, which must be avoided by developers. Several new questions were raised for Pete Fellows: Can we show just the steep and very steep slope areas? Can the slope areas be overlain on a topographic map? Can we add prime agricultural land and deer wintering areas to the natural resources data? Is the data available to show large tracts of continuous forest (500 acres or more)?

Jessica Eaton joined the meeting.

Copy editor’s schedule and final comments to review/approve (7:50) – The final run of copy editing has been done and the latest draft is on the Planning Google Docs folders. Patricia said everyone should check their chapters with an eye toward final placement of photos, tables,

and graphs, whether they should be centered or on a margin with text around them, if the captions are correct, etc. Patricia said her new computer doesn't have Microsoft Word so she will not be able to continue making changes and taking notes. Jamie offered to take over. There was a final set of comments/suggestions from the copy editor that need to be reviewed and approved. The commissioners went through the document and reviewed each suggestion. Patricia noted that any changes in the Introduction also needed to be made in the individual chapters. This was done during the discussion.

c. Discuss warning the Town Plan and the report to go with the warning (9:15) – Dean reported that he had asked Pete Fellows about how to create the report that goes with the warning, and Pete had sent a document describing the contents. Dean and Kevin had both looked at it and found that it asked for information we did not know how to compile. Jason said that the Fairlee planning commission did not have to produce such a report for their new town plan. Dean said he would contact Chris Sargent of TRORC to get samples of reports we could follow.

6. Subdivision (9:25)

Kevin reported that he had met with zoning administrator Mary Ellen Parkman and they had written some new language to answer the questions raised during the last meeting. They inserted comments to explain why Mary Ellen requested the changes. Kevin asked everyone to read sections 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 and the tables in section 2 before the next meeting. Since then, Tim Taylor, the chairman of the Development Review Board (DRB), has contacted Mary Ellen to say that he was rethinking the distinction between major subdivisions and minor subdivisions, which was removed over the course of this rewrite. He told her he was now inclined to put the division back into the regulations. Kevin said he would check directly with Tim to find out why, and if it is so, he recommends that the current draft be given to the DRB so they can mark where and how the major/minor subdivision distinction should be reinserted. Kevin said that Tim had offered to come to a meeting to discuss the issue, but he thinks the full DRB needs to read through the current draft rather than have the Planning Commission start over cold.

7. Other Business (9:35)

Kevin reported that he had received a memo from TRORC. They are looking for people to help develop a local hazard mitigation plan for towns in the region. They have also contacted the Selectboard. Jessica wondered what the Fire Department and Emergency Response Committee might already have in place. Kevin said he would send around the memo, which is an announcement of an initial meeting for all interested parties.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

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