

Thetford Planning Commission
April 5, 2016 – APPROVED Minutes

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

Absent: None

Guests: Jessica Eaton

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of the minutes for the 3/15 meeting
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report (7:39)
None.

5. Town Plan (7:45)

a. Maps update – Dean referred the members to the new draft and list of changes sent by Pete Fellows of the Two Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Planning Commission (TRORC) on April 4. The group reviewed the maps and requested a few final changes. Dean will send the requests. Liz suggested that a hi-resolution version of the final maps be made available on the town website so residents could review them before the warned hearing. Comments for future changes will be collected in the existing Google Docs file.

b. Review Town Plan Report (8:05) – Kevin referred the members to the draft Town Plan Report he had emailed on April 5th. It includes wording required by statute. After a review, Jason moved to approve the report and Patricia seconded his motion. During discussion, Patricia noted that the report should be copy-edited, and the members took the time to do that. Afterward, the motion was approved unanimously.

c. Working group report – advertising the warned hearing – Patricia and Jason reported that they chose to meet after the warning date has been set.

d. Land Use Rewrite – Dean referred the members to the revised sections of the Land Use Chapter, which he had emailed on April 4. The members reviewed his suggested changes and made a few modifications, which he recorded. Patricia moved to accept the changes to the Land Use chapter, as revised during the meeting. Liz seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous vote. Dean will send the new text to the copy editor to insert into the final draft.

6. Subdivision Document update (8:45)

a. Review edits of informal working group – Kevin referred the members to the marked-up version he had prepared during his meeting with Zoning Administrator Mary Ellen Parkman and Tim Taylor of the Development Review Board. The main areas of change concern the authority of the DRB to grant waivers, including Table 2.2, which describes the documents and plats required in the application and which specific items can and cannot be waived. The members began a review of all of the items that needed discussion and approval or further change. As items were approved, the markup in the document was removed. Where there were questions about the meaning or intent, the markup was left. In some cases new comments were added to indicate questions to bring before the DRB.

Jason Crance left the meeting (9:10).

There was a long discussion of the timing of the subdivision review process: when in the process waivers can be applied for, how sensitive issues such as prime soils and wetlands are verified, and how permit conditions are enforced. Kevin will try to get Tim and Mary Ellen to attend the next Planning Commission meeting to answer the commissioners' questions and clarify some of the language about waivers and process. Kevin suggested that Planning Commission members attend a DRB meeting occasionally to become more familiar with their duties and process.

Kevin noted that he had received clarification from Chris Sargent of TRORC about the approval process for new subdivision regulations.

Other Business (9:25):

1. Liz reported that there was a statewide forum on energy planning scheduled for May 3rd, which is the date of the first Planning Commission meeting that month. She said she was planning to attend the forum and would email the information to the Planning listserv. She wondered if the meeting should be rescheduled.

2. Kevin said that the commissioners would need to nominate and vote for officers at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

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