

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

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

Absent: None

Guests: Tim Taylor, Jessica Eaton

(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 the minutes for the 4/5 meeting  
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report (7:39)  
None.

5. Subdivision Document Update

a. Review draft with Tim Taylor – Development Review Board (DRB) member Tim Taylor attended the meeting to discuss changes to the current draft and respond to questions and comments raised at the last Planning Commission meeting. Liz asked how closely the Subdivision Regulations paralleled the Zoning Bylaw, referring to an example where a zoning bylaw had requirements that weren’t referred to in the subdivision regulations, tripping up applicants. Tim replied that the new version brought the two documents into congruence. Dean noted that the two documents cross-referenced each other.

Tim explained that the new draft of the Subdivision Regulations removed the Minor/Major distinction and made the process more straightforward. All applications were treated the same until the preliminary hearing, when any requirements not applicable or appropriate could be determined and waived. He said he felt the new version, because it was more consistent with the Zoning Bylaw, added more protection and was more flexible while still being detailed about what should be considered and what could be waived.

There was a lengthy discussion of each of the requirements that could be waived and what sorts of reasons and documentation were required. The discussion covered contour lines, easements and rights of way, proposed development envelopes (if known or not), general standards, wetland buffer requirements in zoning and the Flood Hazard Bylaw, and soil types. There was also a discussion of the need and enforceability of a Certificate of Compliance as opposed to a Certificate of Occupancy.

All of the comments and questions through to the end of section 2 were dealt with and the new draft document was saved as version 10.1.2.

Tim Taylor left the meeting at 8:57 p.m.

b. Plan for going forward – Kevin said he felt it was time to refer the draft to the entire DRB for review and comment. Liz moved that the current draft be accepted and forwarded to the DRB to review. Michael seconded. There was a brief discussion of the review process. After the DRB review, an updated draft would go to the Selectboard and the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission for further review. There was also a discussion of which should be completed first: the Subdivision Regulation or the Town Plan. Dean noted that the Subdivision Regulation was much more out of date and had been brought into congruence with both the Zoning Bylaw and the draft version of the Town Plan. Kevin said that, essentially, they could be warned for hearing around the same time. There being no more discussion, the motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

6. Town Plan – Due to the late hour and the requirement to elect a new slate of officers by this meeting date, the Town Plan discussion was postponed to the next meeting.

#### 7. Other Business (9:10)

1. Election of Officers – Kevin asked for volunteers for Chairperson. After some discussion about the plan of several long-term members to step down once the Town Plan and Subdivision Regulations had been approved, Kevin agreed to continue in the role of Chairperson. Liz nominated Kevin for the office of Chairperson. Jamie seconded. The vote was 5 in favor, none against, with 1 abstention. After a discussion of the roles of Vice Chair and Clerk, Patricia nominated Jason for Vice Chair and Jamie for Clerk. Kevin seconded the nominations. The vote was unanimous in favor.

2. Jessica reported that the Selectboard could not find a record of the vote to reduce the minimum number of Planning Commission members from 7 to 5. Dean said he would look back through the Planning Commission minutes to see if he could find the meeting where it was reported.

3. Kevin referred the members to a memo and questionnaire from TRORC about the possibility of the State of Vermont purchasing the dams on the Connecticut River that were being offered for sale by TransCanada, the current owner. Jamie said that he had been involved in the sale of dams on the lower Connecticut. After a discussion of some of the benefits and downsides of the purchase, Jamie was delegated to fill in the questionnaire and submit it to TRORC for the Planning Commission. Kevin reported that former member Stuart Blood and Conservation Committee chair Li Shen had both submitted responses and that he had responded personally in support of their statements. He recommend that the other members submit their own responses if so moved. Responses were due by Thursday.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

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