

Thetford Planning Commission
July 19, 2016 – APPROVED Minutes

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

Absent: Jamie Thaxton

Guests: None

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of the minutes for the 6/21 meeting
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report
None.

5. Town Plan

a. Update – is everything on track for the hearing

Patricia went over the Plan and referred the members to the documents on Google Drive. There will be a series of posts made on the Thetford listserv about each chapter, providing an overview of what each covers, along with samples of its goals, policies, and recommendations. A sample of the post for Chapter 1 was available for review. The text in the Town Plan’s introduction was used as a template. The members agreed that Patricia and Jason could make the posts without having to have each one reviewed and approved, since they would all follow the same basic template. Patricia also presented a poster that announced the hearing, and a list of locations to put up posters in town. Everyone agreed the poster was fine as is. Everyone then signed up for the locations where they could hang posters. Patricia handed out copies of the poster. Members who need extras can print them from the file in Google Drive. She asked that all of the posters be hung by Wednesday, July 27th.

Kevin noted that the changes proposed for the Post Mills and Thetford Hill zoning districts should have a separate post rather than being announced only as part of the post about the Land Use chapter, which is at the end of the Town Plan. This is a major change, affecting minimum lot sizes for subdivision and permitted uses in the affected areas, so residents should have as much time as possible to review the proposal and think about how it affects them. Dean reminded the members that he has already prepared before-and-after maps of the changes, included with descriptions in separate PDF files for each district. Patricia said she would prepare a post for the listserv and post it by next week, with a link to the PDFs.

Patricia suggested that all of the members reread the Town Plan before the hearing on August 18. There was a brief discussion of how the hearing will be run.

6. Subdivision Update (8:07)

Jason projected the most recent draft of the Subdivision Regulations on the wall, and Kevin led the members through a continuing review of the existing comments.

3.3(F): Protection of Farmland. There was a brief discussion of the correct name for the soil maps referred to.

Liz Ryan Cole joined the meeting.

3.3(G): Protection of Historical and Cultural Resources. There was a discussion of cases where consideration of historical or architectural significance had affected a subdivision. None of the members were aware that it had ever happened outside of the Thetford Hill Historic District. Anderson Hall was the one example where the original renovation plans were denied because the state considered the building to be a significant example of 1950s institutional architecture.

3.4(C) & (D): Control of Storm Water: There was a brief discussion of who would design or pay for the engineering plans or know where to find the data referred to in the regulations. Kevin checked the current Subdivision Regulations to see if the same language was there but found it was very different, and there is no comment from the Zoning Administrator. A comment was inserted in the document to discuss this with the DRB.

3.6(I)(3)(f): Traffic & Road Capacity: The paragraph refers to the case of Conditional Use Review. Why is it referred to only here and not throughout the regulations? A comment was inserted to discuss this with the DRB.

3.6(J): Road Names and Signs: The paragraph states: "Roads shall be named in accordance with Thetford road naming policies, as approved by the Selectboard, and shall have specific historic, cultural or geographical relevance." The 2014 Street Naming and Street Addressing Ordinance on the town web site does not list any naming conventions, so the reference to "specific historic, cultural, or geographical relevance" was removed.

7. Other Business (9:15)

Michael gave a brief report on the presentation made by the regional planning commission on siting of alternative energy generation installations. The guidelines will not be finalized until the regional plan has been updated, which probably won't be until next spring. Thetford is in the best position it can be at the time, because we have language in the draft Town Plan stating that the Town will be a party in all siting decisions and that a map will be prepared and the Zoning Bylaws amended as soon as the guidelines are available.

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

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