

**Thetford Planning Commission
February 7, 2017 – APPROVED Minutes**

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

Absent: Michael Schunk

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 1/17/17 meeting
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report - None

5. Town Plan

a. Follow up assignments – Jamie reported that a message from Li Shen explained where the list of endangered/threatened species came from. He will include the specific citation and list for Thetford. He also updated the vernal pool language slightly.

Dean reported that he had notified Pete Fellows of the regional planning commission to add the web address for flood hazard data to the legend on Map 4. Pete replied that he had done so and would start adding it to the map in other towns Town Plans.

Liz Ryan Cole joined the meeting. Jason moved to accept the new vernal pool language into the final draft of the Town Plan. Dean seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Update and discussion – focus on Comment Resolution Document.

The discussion resumed at comment #174. The comment referred only to the amount of narrative and facts included rather than a specific change to be made.

Comment #175 referred to the Historic Resources chapter, pointing out that many of the recommendations referred to actions by the Town when it should refer to the Thetford Historical Society, which is not a municipal body. The commission discussed the goals, policies, and recommendations and decided that the goal and recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 6 would be changed to refer to the Thetford Historical Society. The rest were correct in referring to the Town.

Comment #176, by the Zoning Administrator, asked that Recommendation 2 be changed to specifically suggest the Thetford Historical Society develop a list of historical sites in Town that should be added to the Town’s GIS mapping data. The commissioners agreed and reworded the recommendation to suit.

Comment #177 was addressed by the action taken to resolve comment #175.

Comment #178, referring to easements that would allow public access to historic sites, was reworded to be clearer that landowners would be encouraged to provide such easements but not required.

Comment #179 objected to having specific privately owned historic sites listed in the Town Plan without the owners' permission. The recommendation was reworded to apply to any and all historic sites.

Comment #180 was a question rather than a request for specific changes. An answer was entered into the resolution column and will be passed along to the commenter.

Comment #181, regarding light pollution referred to in the Scenic Resources chapter, was made by two people who objected to lighting ordinances in town. The section of the narrative and the related recommendation were changed to say "should consider" instead of "should."

Comment #182 was a recommendation by the Zoning Administrator that the plan should identify specific scenic resources that needed protection rather than being too general. The commissioners agreed but noted that the state law regarding scenic resources was still in flux. It was decided to defer this change to the next update of the Town Plan, by which time the law would hopefully be more settled.

Comment #183 referred to the use of the nebulous term "village feel" and the use of "business district" and "strip development" instead of the accepted zoning terms. Recommendation 3 in Scenic Resources was reworded to read, "The Town should consider zoning regulations that reduce sprawl in Thetford's villages along Routes 5, 113, and 244." Dean noted that the change to the Village District near the I-91 interchange in Thetford Hill and the changes along Routes 113 and 244 in Post Mills, described in the Land Use chapter take a big step toward fulfilling this recommendation.

Comment #184 was noted as requiring more discussion than there was time for and will be readdressed at the next meeting.

6. Other Business (9:20)

Kevin referred the commissioners to an email received from Dori Wolfe on 2/6 regarding approval of a community solar power project proposed by the Thetford Strafford Community Solar (TSCS) committee, to be located on the Braley Farm in Post Mills. The email included the original proposal, a cover letter, and a request that the Selectboard, the Planning Commission and the regional planning commission each sign a draft letter of approval required by the State. After a brief review of the previous discussion of the project, Dean moved that the letter be signed. Liz seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Kevin will print the draft letter, sign it, and return it to Ms. Wolfe.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

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