

Thetford Planning Commission
April 18, 2017 – APPROVED Minutes

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

Absent: Jamie Thaxton, Michael Schunk

Guests: None

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:24 p.m.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of the minutes for the 4/4/17 meeting
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report: None

5. Town Plan (7:31)

a. Update of changes with copy-editor – Dean reported that he had sent the Master List of Changes to the copy editor. She will be away for the school vacation week but will pick up the hard copy draft with markup when she returns and hopes to have the changes made before the next meeting. Kevin presented his final rewrite of the narrative regarding the purchase of recreational properties. It was reviewed to be sure that the version in the Master List of Changes was correct.

b. Comments Resolution Document status – Jamie was not present and the document had not yet been fully updated so this discussion was postponed till the next meeting.

c. Review accompanying letter to the Selectboard – There was a discussion of the comments submitted since the last meeting and a final draft was prepared. There was a longer discussion of the process for the handing off the approved draft to the Selectboard for their review, considering the role that the Planning Commission should play in the lead-up to and during the Selectboard hearing. The commissioners will be present at Selectboard meetings when the Town Plan is discussed to answer questions about the Plan as well as to describe the process by which the text was created and reviewed. The final letter will be signed by all of the commissioners.

6. Subdivision – next steps (8:09)

Kevin referred the commissioners to version 10.5, which he had just sent via email to make sure everyone had it. Discussion began at the “paint dry” marker at Section 3.9 (A & B), the first comment being #12. Any comments left in the document before that point need to be discussed with the Zoning Administrator and Development Review Board (DRB). It was determined that the map referred to in comment 12 is the Land Use Map in the Town Plan.

There was a long discussion of the statement in 3.9 (B), “Where a development composed of one or more plats will accommodate a total of more than one hundred (100) dwellings, the Commission may also require the designation of necessary public school sites or a payment in lieu thereof.” Liz questioned why the cut-off was specifically 100 dwellings, given that each dwelling could house more than one child. In the end, she volunteered to contact the regional planning commission to find out where the guideline came from.

A few redundant sentences were trimmed and language tidied up. Three more comments were left for the Zoning Administrator to resolve: Is certified mail was required when announcing public hearings on a notice of appeal? Is a Driveway defined as serving two parcels or three before it is classified as a private road? (The Definition does not agree with the description under Section 3.6 (B) Road Standards. In the calculation of Slope, is the “proposed development area” the same thing as the “development envelope”?)

Any questions that can’t be resolved by the Zoning Administrator will need to be reviewed by the DRB, after which the entire document will need one last review by the commissioners.

Jason had been updating the document during the discussion and emailed version 10.6 to the commissioners right away.

7. Other Business (9:20)

Kevin described the regional planning commission’s hearing about the proposed amendments to the regional plan, which he had attended the previous week. He said most of the questions were about the siting of energy production facilities (e.g., wind farms, solar arrays, and a lot of discussion about small hydro). The rules are still in flux. He said he felt some of the changes were for the better, but the representatives of the towns present were all awaiting the final decisions on these siting issues.

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

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