

**Thetford Planning Commission
December 19, 2017 – APPROVED Minutes**

Present: Jason Crance (Chair), Jamie Thaxton, Liz Ryan Cole, Dean Whitlock (Recording Clerk)

Absent: None

Guests: Jessica Eaton (Selectboard liaison)

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

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

2. Public Comment: None

3. Review of minutes from the 11/21 meeting.

Jamie noted that he had not yet contacted Ned Swanberg of the Agency of Natural Resources to get all of the details about the new River Corridors programs. The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report

Jessica Eaton had not yet arrived. Dean reported that he had been told Jessica would not run for her Selectboard position in March. There was a discussion of the continuing need to find additional members for the Planning Commission, since so many times it was not possible to have a quorum present. Neither the Planning Commission members nor the Selectboard had been able to enlist new volunteers. Liz suggested shortening the meetings so they would end at 9:00 p.m. instead of 9:30 or later. Jason said the idea was worth considering. Liz said she would not be able to make the next two meetings but could attend one on Thursday, January 18th. Dean moved that the other three members meet in subcommittee on Tuesday the 2nd to continue the review of the Subdivision Regulations if the task wasn't finished this evening. Jason seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Jessica Eaton joined the meeting

Jessica reported that the Selectboard would not be working on the Town Plan during January due to the need to finalize the Town budget. She confirmed that she would step down from the Selectboard in March. The Commissioners all expressed their sorrow at her leaving.

There was a brief discussion of the Town Plan approval process and what the next steps would be. When the Selectboard finishes its review of the comments and has drafted their changes, the text will be sent to the copy editor to make the necessary changes and clean up the formatting. Then there will be a second hearing.

Jessica left the meeting.

5. Subdivision – Review and discussion of proposed changes

The final changes were made to the Purpose statement in Section 1.2. Dean noted a formatting change to make in Table 2.2, moving an instruction about the shaded cells to the top of the table. All of the outstanding comments were addressed. Most of the suggested changes

were accepted as is. There was a long discussion of Section 3.2(A) Lot and Site Layout Purpose. Redundant points were removed, leaving only the items that were specific to Subdivision and not covered in the Town Plan or Zoning Bylaw. The word “encourage” was changed to “consider”. The remaining list of bullet points was reformatted.

Standard 3.2(B)(7) regarding “spaghetti lots” was discussed. It is intended to inhibit the development of long narrow lots or L-shaped lots because they tend to break up forest blocks and also can create problems with setbacks and building envelopes. The statement “in no case shall” as replaced with “shall not”. Since this standard could now be waived by the Development Review Board if the situation warranted a waiver, the rest of the text was left as is. It was noted that the Zoning Administrator suggested this standard be moved or added to the Zoning Bylaw. That question will be addressed when the Zoning Bylaw is updated after a new Town Plan is approved.

Referring to the definition of Subdivision on the first page, Jason said the definition should be reviewed but should be in the Definitions section. He suggested removing the boxed definition from page 1. Dean said he had copied the text into a separate file so it could be reviewed at a future meeting. The others agreed and the definition was removed.

Jason had to leave early so the discussion was ended at section 3.2(C).

6. Other Business

Jason said he had received an email from the Town Clerk about the Planning Commission report that will need to go into the Town Report. The deadline is January 9. Dean said he would go over last year’s report, update it, and send it to Jason.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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