

Thetford Planning Commission
March 27, 2018 – APPROVED Notes

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

Absent: Liz Ryan Cole

Guests: David Forbes, Erica Ko

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Jason called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.

There was no quorum. This was a subcommittee meeting to meet David Forbes, who is interested in joining, and to review the current status of the Town Plan and Subdivision Regulations.

2. Public Comment

None. Erica Ko explained she was a member of the Energy Committee and was attending to learn about the status of the draft Town Plan and familiarize herself with the operation of the Planning Commission.

3. Review of the notes from the 3/6/18 meeting.

The minutes were not reviewed due to the lack of a quorum.

4. Selectboard Report and Town Plan Report

Jason referred to an email sent by Selectboard chair Stuart Rogers on March 24th regarding when members of the Planning Commission could attend a Selectboard meeting in order to formally receive their proposed changes to the draft Town Plan. Stuart offered a 7:30 p.m. slot on any upcoming Monday evening. Jason said he will suggest the 2nd of April.

5. Update on Forest Block Language

Jason reported that he had had a long discussion of the forest block language with Pete Fellows of the Two Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Commission and referred to an email sent by Pete on March 27th describing the steps and options involved in developing the forest block language and accompanying map. By new statute, some description of Thetford's forest blocks and the wildlife corridors connecting them must be added to the draft plan before it continues through the approval process.

At this point, Jason, Dean, and Jamie explained the current status of the draft Town Plan to the guests, pointing out the delays caused by having only 4 members on what is supposed to be a 7-member commission. Erica said she had heard from a colleague on the Energy Committee that the Selectboard, at their last meeting, had discussed the problem of too few members and had voted to reduce the size of the Planning Commission to 5 members. After some discussion, Dean said he would check with Stuart Rogers to find out if the change had occurred and when it would take effect.

The commissioners went over the email from Pete Fellows to familiarize themselves with the next steps. The email includes sample maps and sample goals, policies, and

recommendations. The basic steps are: 1. Describe Thetford's forest blocks in the forests section of Chapter 5 – Natural Resources; 2. Describe how these blocks will be treated in the Land Use chapter; 3. Add goals, policies, and recommendations to each chapter; 4. Create maps.

Pete suggested that the commission meet with local foresters to identify the forest blocks. Jason said he had suggested that Pete come to a meeting, but Pete countered that we should first develop a draft of the new language and send it to him for review. Dean said he would contact forester Erhard Frost. Jason said he would contact Butternut and Redstart foresters.

Jason said he had also contacted Sue Fritz, a co-chair of the Conservation Commission, who had offered to work with the Planning Commission to develop the forest block maps using the state's online BioFinder app. He forwarded an email she had sent him on March 9th with a draft version of a map based on the data in BioFinder.

6. See item 4.

7. Update on Subdivision Editing Timetable

Dean reported that he had sent an email to the copy editor after the last meeting answering her questions but had not heard back from her yet. He said he would contact her before the next meeting.

8. Other Business

David said that he would like to join the Planning Commission. He will send an email officially offering to join, and Jason will forward that to Stuart Rogers so the Selectboard can appoint him as soon as possible, hopefully at their next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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