

**Thetford Planning Commission  
July 31, 2018 – APPROVED Minutes**

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

Absent: None

Guests: None

(Numbers below refer to agenda items.)

1. Jason called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.
2. Public Comment  
None
3. Review of the minutes from the 7/17/18 meeting.  
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report

Jamie reported that Cathee Clement had responded to his inquiry about the status of the Village Trails project. She reported that the project was no longer going forward because of the very large number of landowners who would have had to give permission for a trail to cross their property. Enough of them said no that it was not possible to find reasonable paths for the trail to follow.

5. Review and modify Town Plan draft based on Selectboard and TRORC comments

David reported that the Montague Dam, though not functional, was still in place. The Conservation Commission had developed a plan for removal, with help from the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC), and had approached the owner; however, the owner was not interested in removing the dam at the time. Removing what's left of the dam would mean giving up water flowage rights permanently. David said he would discuss the situation again with the CRC to see if it would make sense to approach the owner again at this later date.

Li Shen sent a new, much edited version of Chapter 5, Natural Resources, with the goal of making the chapter shorter without weakening the goals, policies, and recommendations. The Planning Commission finished updating the sections of the chapter that the Selectboard had managed to review, then went back to the beginning of the chapter to compare Li's new draft with the current draft and decide which changes to accept or leave as is. Jason made changes in the file. Because Li had been working with an earlier version of the chapter, many of her suggested deletions had already been made. Also, because the Selectboard had made it clear in their comments and suggested deletions that they did not want the Town Plan to seem like a text book, there was additional material that the Planning Commission felt should be removed. On the other hand, the regional planning commission had advised that the narrative should contain

enough information to support the Goals, Policies, and Recommendations, so some suggested deletions were not made.

The first paragraph of the Introduction was retained but the second paragraph was removed. The “Key Concepts” lists were removed since the concepts were explained in the narrative. The Connecticut River section was left as is except for the deletion of a few sentences about dams and culverts that the commission felt were “text book” material. The explanation about the two Mud Ponds was clarified in a way that made it shorter. The text on Wetlands was adjusted to match Li’s suggested version. Photo 10 was kept. The text on Vernal Pools (recently rewritten) was kept as is. Small changes were made to the section on Ground Water and Aquifers. The section on Slope (recently rewritten specifically to shorten it and support the recommendations) was further shortened by removing three redundant sentences.

Liz Ryan Cole joined the meeting and was brought up to date on the proceedings.

There was a long discussion on the section and recommendations concerning Agricultural and Silvicultural Soils. Some of the narrative was written in the form of recommendations, essentially repeating the listed Recommendations. The supporting language was left in the narrative but the repetition of Recommendations was removed. The discussion also included questions about whether Act 250 would override anything recommended in a Town Plan. The Commission agreed that the remaining language was flexible in that it covers types of development not subject to Act 250.

Figure 14, listing the number of acres in town dedicated to certain agricultural uses and soils is not clear in showing what is in Current Use. Liz will check with the Listers. Photo 11 was removed.

The review ended just before the section on Landscape Features.

#### 6. Discuss Town Plan revision schedule

Jason said that he did not foresee scheduling any more “make-up” meetings. The next meeting will be next week on the 7<sup>th</sup>, which is the first Tuesday in the month.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

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