

**Thetford Planning Commission
August 8, 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. Jamie (acting Chair until Jason arrived) called the meeting to order at 7:21 p.m.

2. Public Comment
None

3. Review of the minutes from the 7/31/18 meeting.
The minutes were accepted as amended.

4. Selectboard Report
None

5. Review and modify Town Plan draft based on Selectboard and TRORC comments
David reported that he had spoken with Ron Rhodes of the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC), who gave him an update on the status of the proposed removal of the Montague Dam in Post Mills. The CRC plans to contact the landowner soon to see if some terms can be arranged to put the land around the dam in a conserved status and remove the dam with no expense to the landowner. David said he would try to be a part of the discussion.

The review of the Natural Resources chapter took up where it had left off at the last meeting, the section on Landscape Features. In comparing the current draft with the edited version prepared by Li Shen, it was noted that the narrative section on Minerals had been removed, even though there was still a policy and recommendation about minerals. There was a long discussion about whether to include the recommendation or restore the narrative. It was noted that two of the Minerals recommendations overlapped and could be combined, and that they applied more to their effect on water purity. They were combined and moved to the All Waters section, and a sentence supporting them was added to the narrative.

Jason joined the meeting.

Dean noted that the section on Landscape Features was only three short paragraphs and suggested that minerals be included in Landscape Features. A place was found where this made sense. The Policy and remaining Recommendations for Minerals were then included with those for Landscape Features.

The commissioners went back over the sections on Wetlands, Vernal Pools, Groundwater/Aquifers, Slope, and Soils to make sure that their Goals, Policies, and Recommendations were still supported by the narrative. The second policy for wetlands was

deleted and recommendations 1 and 2 were reworded. The policy for vernal pools was made a recommendation and reworded. The second recommendation under Aquifers was deleted. There was a long discussion about whether the fifth recommendation should be removed or reworded. It refers to large, commercial extractions of groundwater (e.g., for a water-bottling plant). David found on the web the germane sections of Vermont Act 199, with suggested language for planning and zoning, and emailed the links to the others. Dean said he would read over the materials and come up with new wording and a reference for the narrative before the next meeting. Recommendation 6 was rewritten for clarity. The goal and policy 3 under Agricultural Soils were reworded. There was a brief discussion of policy 2, which may be more appropriate for the Economic Development chapter. Moving will be considered when the review reaches that chapter. Recommendation 6 regarding locally produced food for school lunches was deleted because it did not relate to soils and was already being addressed by programs in the Elementary School. Recommendation 7 regarding zoning for farm stands was deleted because it is already covered in zoning under farmers markets.

This brought the review up to Landscape Features again. Recommendation 2 regarding driveways was removed because the specifications for driveways are covered in the Vermont road standards, which the Selectboard adopts each year as Thetford's standards. Recommendations 3 and 4 were combined and reworded. Recommendation 5, asking that the Town encourage landowners and residents to educate themselves about enduring features, was deleted because the Selectboard had already asked that several similar recommendations be deleted.

6. Discuss Town Plan revision schedule

Jason referred the group to an email from the planning Selectboard liaison, Cathee Clement, asking about the proposed meeting with a representative from the regional planning commission. Jason said that the date for that meeting was a moving target and now depended on completing the review and having the new draft reviewed by the regional commission and then meeting with the Selectboard to discuss what was and wasn't changed and why. Jason also noted that the new required Forest Blocks language should be fitted into the Natural Resources chapter at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

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