

**Town of Grafton Planning Commission Minutes**  
Tuesday, October 9, 2018, Grafton Town Garage

Planning Commissioners Present: Eric Stevens, Liisa Kissel, Dave Culver, Kim Record, Chris Wallace, Matt Siano, Valerie Rooney, Staff present: Chuck Wise. Community Members Present: Sam Battaglino, David Acker.

Hearing called to order: 6:30PM

**Public Hearing Continuation: David Acker Subdivision**

Chuck reviewed the proposed subdivision – all outstanding issues have been addressed. This is a two lot subdivision, no development proposed. David indicated that the property will remain in his ownership and that no development is proposed.

Motion to approve the Acker minor subdivision as presented (Liisa, 2<sup>nd</sup> Eric) PASSED

Chuck will revise the draft decision to make sure we have the current dates, the list of Commissioners present. Once those edits are made, Chuck and Dave will sign off on the Decision. Chris reminded Commissioners that if anyone is an abutter, in the past the practice was to have them recuse themselves from voting. It is not an issue in this Decision, just a practice that has been done in the past.

Dave stated the subdivision hearing is officially closed and there are no other subdivisions in process.

Meeting called to order: 6:33PM

**Agenda approval**

No changes

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes of September 11, 2018 as corrected (Chris, 2<sup>nd</sup> Liisa) PASSED  
Valerie abstains.

Motion to approve the minutes of October 2, 2018 as corrected (Liisa, 2<sup>nd</sup> Eric) PASSED Kim abstains.

**Public Comment**

Sam would prefer having a snack bar at meetings.

**Unfinished Business: Village Center Designation**

Liisa indicated that village center designation is on the next Selectboard agenda (Monday, 15<sup>th</sup>). The Selectboard will review the basic description of the application and Liisa will be available to answer any questions. Dave asked about process going forward. Liisa stated that

we will need two letters going to the State and Windham Regional Commission. The Selectboard can make a decision at this meeting and then the letters can be prepared and forwarded when it is time to do so. Liisa stated that she is working with Jeff Nugent on mapping and while right now his priority is the town plan maps, we will be working on the village designation boundary maps after that work is completed.

Matt asked about the historic district. Liisa stated that historic district will be included in the application but is not the same as the village center. The historic district is just the 94 buildings that have been designated, the village center will go beyond that area. Dave does not like that, but Liisa stated these designations serve different purposes.

### **FY20 budget proposal**

Dave stated the Planning Commission will propose its budget to the Selectboard in late October. This is a change from the original process that was proposed. Kim indicated the meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 1<sup>st</sup> because of the work with the budget and capital plan. Dave indicated a need to flesh out numbers on publication printing and professional development. Chuck emphasized the need to include monies for local grant matches – once the Town Plan is adopted the town will be able to apply for planning grant funds. Eric would like to see a municipal grant to update the flood mapping with the new LIDAR data. Chuck stated that most months he does not put in any more than 5-6 hours of work. Amounts were discussed. Valerie mentioned that minute taking could be separated from Chuck's work. Consensus was to allow Chuck to continue with minute taking. If Chuck is absent from meetings, someone would volunteer to record the meeting. Total amount requested is \$2,500 for Planning and \$600 for Zoning.

### **Proposed Development Review Board**

Dave and Liisa updated the Planning Commission on the proposed DRB for the Town of Grafton. The Selectboard has not formally decided to establish a DRB but it will be discussed at the next meeting. Dave asked Commissioners to consider the proposal and provide him with input he can communicate to the Selectboard. Liisa reviewed the number of flood zoning and subdivision proposals over the last few years and there has not been a significant volume of activity. Discussion followed on the strengths and weaknesses of a combined board or separate boards for planning and development review. Dave will provide input to the Selectboard stating the issue can be studied a little further to ensure a transition to two boards is necessary, a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Selectboard would be an ideal forum to discuss this transition. The Planning Commission does not support a new Board at this point because there is not sufficient community input and we have not seen the supporting research to justify separate boards for planning and development review. This discussion can occur after the Town Plan has been finished. When this discussion occurs, invite additional experts to facilitate such as Windham Regional Commission. The goal is to have a transparent and open process for reviewing the possible creation of a Development Review Board.

Motion to have the Planning Commission Chair represent the above mentioned issues at the next Selectboard meeting. (Valerie, 2<sup>nd</sup> Liisa). PASSED Kim abstains.

Chris indicated that getting these comments to the Selectboard as early as possible and before the meeting will be helpful, everyone agreed.

### **Town Plan update**

Dave reviewed the most recent edits of the town plan. Those edits will be recorded in a revised town plan that will be posted on the town's website.

Commissioners extensively reviewed a change of recommendations surrounding development review and approval in the river corridor and flood hazard area. Motion to insert the proposed language that includes the two options which are adopting the river corridors or community rating system. These standards are needed to qualify for the State's preferential match in FEMA declared disaster funding. (Liisa, 2<sup>nd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_) FAILED.

Eric will pass out the Fitzgerald river corridor mapping report to the Commissioners. Chuck stated this mapping will help Commissioners understand the different boundaries for the FEMA floodway, FEMA flood hazard area, Vermont river corridor, and Fitzgerald field survey flood zone. These boundaries are often very different and its important to see what river scientists believe is our flood area based on them walking the river versus mapping work using best available topography and flood data.

Dave asked if Chuck is paying attention and administered a pop quiz. Does Chuck realize that he was volunteered to update the "Response to Vermont Planning Goals" chapter of the Town Plan? Chuck replied with an unenthusiastic affirmative and indicated that once the plan is finalized, and before the public notice period starts, he will fully update that section. At issue is that all the previous references are no longer accurate between the cite numbers that have since been changes with the reordering of Goals, Policies, and Recommendations. Chuck will review the plan anew and update Chapter 13.

Dave has kept WRC informed of our anticipate public hearing date. Ideally the maps are ready for the public hearing, but we do not need the maps to be finalized. Dave has not heard back from WRC about where they are on map production.

Consensus was to include Skip Lisle's work as a reference and not an appendix. This resolves the issue of having personal opinions reflected in a town plan which is a Planning Commission document that is produced collaboratively.

Commissioners discussed the final steps needed for the public hearing. Motion to approve the draft Town plan and have a public hearing on 6:30pm, November 13<sup>th</sup>, Grafton Elementary School (Eric, Liisa 2<sup>nd</sup> ). PASSED. Further discussion about public hearing preparation – public hearings can be attended by no one or there can be a big audience..

Motion to approve an expense not to exceed \$200 for Kim to print copies of the Town Plan for the public hearing. (Eric, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chris). PASSED

Dave stated that he will review needed preparations for the hearing and will consider doing a summary presentation. If there seems to be a high interest among citizens, he will email Commissioners and request an earlier meeting, so we can prepare as a group.

Dave reminded Commissioners there is a presentation on resilient roads on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and encouraged people to attend.

**Adjournment**

9:04 PM

**Next regular meeting:**

November 13, 2018