**Minutes**

**Grafton Planning Commission Meeting**

**Tuesday, March 10, 2020**

1. Attendance – Commissioners: Dave Culver, Chair; Eric Stevens; Matt Siano; Chris Wallace; Val Rooney.
2. Call to Order by Dave Culver – 6:35 pm
3. Minutes approved by consensus as written
4. Reorganization
   1. Chair, Dave Culver
   2. Vice Chair, Eric Stevens
   3. Community Survey, Matt Siano
   4. Wastewater Liaison, Chris Wallace
   5. Two Windham Regional Commissioners (The Planning Commission nominates; the Selectboard appoints)
      1. Eric Stevens
      2. Second nomination to be determined. Chris Wallace will advertise for the second position in the Grafton News.
   6. Clerk, Valerie Rooney
      1. Discussion: The Planning Commission hopes to hire someone to take and distribute the minutes. The clerk’s job is to make sure it gets done.
      2. Present Town Rate - $18/hour; we need to advertise but no one was put in charge of this.
   7. Village Center Designation, Matt Siano
      1. Suzanne Welch recommended we contact Craig Rugless, a resident with a strong interest in the Village revitalization.
      2. Liisa Kissel was also mentioned as a community member that might be willing to help since she did the majority of the work to get the initiative started and to the point it is at now.
   8. Selectboard Liaison
      1. Chris Wallace volunteered to take this role but can’t attend every Selectboard meeting
      2. Kathy Siano was in the audience and is on the Grafton Selectboard. She agreed to act as his primary contact and to do her best to communicate with him when relevant information needs to be communicated.
      3. It was noted that strong communication between the Planning Commission and the Selectboard is critical to success and needs to continue to improve.
5. Public Comment – none
6. Reports
   1. Windham Regional Commission (Eric Steven)– Multiple meetings have been canceled recently. Nothing to report
   2. Development Review Board (Chris Wallace) - One minor subdivision completed in early February. A new minor subdivision application has recently been submitted.
   3. Water/Wastewater Committee (Matt Siano and Chris Wallace) They are developing a survey specific to this issue and will communicate with the Planning Commission to make sure the two surveys don’t overlap.
7. Correspondence – none
8. Unfinished Business
   1. Land Use Discussion Panel (April 14 Regular meeting; Grafton Elementary School)
      1. Purpose/Objective – What are the rules and regulations that control land use in Vermont and how does the Town Plan impact that control?
         * 1. Act 250
           2. Act 171
           3. Other
      2. Guest Panelists (confirmations and recommendations)
         * 1. Stephanie Giles of the Act 250 office – cannot make it
           2. Al Sands recommended Linda Maddison, Act 250 Coordinator and/or Julia Smidt, commissioner for act 250, retired coordinator.
           3. Sam Schneski, State Forester, has been invited; he has responded that he might be able to attend.
           4. John Bennett of the Windham Regional Commission; confirmed
           5. Dave Ross has agreed to facilitate the event
           6. Recommendation: Margo Gia – Windham Regional Commission Water Quality, GIS, Natural Resources Specialist
           7. Recommendation: A representative to explain the Biofinder and how it was developed
           8. Vermont League of City and Towns?
           9. It was suggested that an expert on the Emerald Ash Borer attended but after discussion, it was determined that this topic was outside the boundaries of the evening’s topic.
      3. Format Discussion
         * 1. Introductions by each guest and an overview of their ‘expertise’
           2. A set of questions, developed by the Planning Commission, to be asked of the guests. Dave will develop and share a Google Doc with the other Commissioners to develop the questions.
           3. An open forum of questions by the audience
      4. There is much work to be done in the next three weeks; Dave Culver will take the lead on this.
   2. Village Park Project – Al Sands summarized that the Selectboard is hoping to convert a log landing to a parking area and to add a lean-to. There have been concerns about the impact of the Town Plan on a potential Act 250 permit because the Village Park is identified as “Critical Resource Area” on the Propose Land Use Map.
      1. A Project Review Sheet (PRS) was submitted to the ANR by Al Sands. The response was that an Act 250 permit was not required because the project was less than 10 acres in size.
      2. Motion by Chris Wallace, – “The Grafton Planning Commission feels that the Village Park project, including the parking area and lean-to is compliant to the recently adopted Town Plan and the Planning Commission supports it.” Valerie Rooney then asked to amend the motion to eliminate the part about the Planning Commission supporting it because they don’t know enough about it. Chris agreed and Valarie seconded the amended motion.
         * 1. Discussion –

Many questions arose: Is this considered ‘recreational improvement’? Is this considered ‘maintenance’? How much work beyond the parking area can be improved (i.e. better access from the parking area to the trails)? Will this set precedents for future projects on Critical Resource Lands?

Although not all questions could be answered, Al assured the Planning Commission that he planned on seeking answers to those and other question as he moves forward.

* + - * 1. **Motion, as amended, PASSED unanimously: “*The Grafton Planning Commission affirms that the proposed parking area and lean-to in the Village Park complies with the Town Plan as envisioned by the Grafton Planning Commission.*”**
  1. Next steps in the Town Plan – instead of reviewing one chapter per month, Dave Culver will ‘attack’ large sections of it and present those changes as he completes them. The Planning Commission would then discuss, modify and hopefully accept those edits. The goal would be to have the edited Town Plan voted on the Town by next spring or early summer (2021).

1. Next meeting – April 14, 2020, 6:30 pm at the Grafton Elementary School
2. Motion to adjourn by consensus at 8:24 pm

Respectfully submitted, Dave Culver