

Grafton Planning Commission

Regular Monthly Meeting
Tuesday March 12, 7:00 PM
Grafton Town Hall 2nd Floor
ADA Accessible

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81340393010?pwd=TDk5Y3FDaUNYNVBHNmRRVGNwbWRiZz09>

MINUTES

Planning Committee: Ron, Eric, Matt, Lester, Buzz and Zoom guest Morris Root
Public. Cathy Siano-Goodwin and Steve Sargent

Meeting called to Order at 7:11

March Agenda Approved

February Meeting Minutes Approved

Joint Meeting with Emergency Management FEMA Mapping Bill Kearns reported on the joint meeting. Morris [engineer hired by ?] said the main stem of the Saxon's river was supposed to be re-studied. That is new information. For example, The south branch of the Saxon's River, the maps may look new, but the data is from the 1987 flood hazard analysis.

The flood plain map has been improved. That said, these areas where they have not determined flood elevations, we find there are several homes where there are no elevations given. All along one stream. We can alert FEMA to that need for more work. Eric: our entire watershed streams have been mapped with Lidar. Has that data been used by FEMA? Morris: Lidar mapping has been used when they mapped elevations and determined flood plain. I don't know how they have used Lidar data where flood elevations haven't been mapped.

Most likely, they haven't used Lidar as fully as they could have.

Morris: They also used GIS software and other software, but that hasn't really improved anything.

Question for clarification: Are the current digital maps less accurate Maps? And the "proposed" map is the "improved" map?

A: Yes.

The committee looked at the proposed maps looking for problems.—For Examples: Cooperman's house, and their back yard; Also culvert at the beginning of Stagecoach Rd; Carrie's

Morris: Doesn't know if FEMA would come to re-study an area on a stream, that is not on the Saxon's River, where that area is sparsely populated. In Zone A, the homeowner in order to build something would be required to get insurance before which

they would need to do a letter of application/emendation. That homeowner would first have an engineer to figure out the elevation of the water and the threat based on hydraulics and hydrology (how much water it should carry and how much the height of the flood will be), before they can even do the letter of application/emendation. PC discussed the river corridors in relation to the proposed revision of law Act 250 PC also noted that there are some areas where the information is not adequate because the data is too far apart, and buildings are too sparse. What they are correcting in the maps is largely averaging. Not following the actual topography, so the people in the middle of the two data points have inadequate accuracy for their properties. There are some properties that must do a separate survey evaluation to fill in/make accurate the maps.

Motion approved: Bill to write up a comment that states: Accept the new mapping as proposed, eliminate the digital inaccurate mapping and urge FEMA to do a detailed new study for the south branch instead of continuing with the detailed redelineation.

Wastewater. Matt spoke with the Frame Group who are working on the Londonderry cluster systems. Londonderry is having the same problems that we are: soils, location, siting. Same issues that we have been finding in Grafton: environmental, funding, political. Shortly after the Frame Group spoke to state, the state understood that we wanted to hire different engineering firm and quickly paid the balance that they owed Grafton and that money is going right out again to T&B. T&B is now going to research the cluster system and the living machine concept. So, T&B finally agreed to do what we have been asking for more than a year.

Wastewater committee is now Matt, Cathy, Suzanne, Joe.

Eric: PFOA's are ubiquitous in the environment and it is nearly impossible to get rid of them. Many of the legislators are dealing with this problem by not studying their presence. VT has a drinking water standard that is stricter than most in the country. Fast food packaging, certain kind of clothing, certain kind of paper. So whatever we do for wastewater system, should also be filtering these contaminants, as well

Old Business. Keeping in mind the town survey. Re: the flood hazard maps, the new maps, once accepted, will need public comment, and then the new Maps will be part of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Discussion of the proposed bills discussed at the last meeting. Windham Regional tries to stay neutral in proposed legislation. But, we could ask Chris about potential impacts regardless of opinion. There was a letter drafted by the Selectboard regarding three proposed bills: revised H687, H289, S236, S213, and 24-0461. The Selectboard sent the letter to the Governor and to our representatives.

Discussion: 70% (or possibly even 90%) of the state is going to be under Act 250, so that there will be state-wide zoning authority.

Morgan will handle the signing of the letter to authorize payment for continuing engineering study (\$34,500). It was pointed out that this additional payment does not appear to include description of the work to be done.

Next meeting April 9

Meeting Adjourned 8:55