

Grafton Planning Commission

Regular Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, July 16, 7:00 PM

Grafton Town Hall 2nd Floor

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

Planning Committee: Matt Siano, Eric Stevens, Buzz Fisher, Les Schwalb

MINUTES

1. Approval of agenda.

2. Approval of May Minutes. Will be done at August Meeting

3. Outdoor Alliance Informational Update: For the (cancelled) June meeting, Matt had invited Meg Gonzalez to come to speak to us about issues of the Grafton Outdoor Alliance. Buzz reported some of the issues that emerged from that the GOA open house meeting (organizers were collecting feedback in a systematic way so more planning will be occurring). Some issues: 1) Outdoor Alliance planning not about creating big events or attracting alot of people but about making Grafton a better experience for people who already come here or live here, 2) many towns need to create assets that would be inviting to people, but Grafton already has the assets and just needs to make them more accessible/visible/connected; 3) interest in doing something with the baseball field. 4) Big event like Faery Festival at Nature Museum creates a parking issue, 5) porta-pottys can be located in various places. This planning will need to be included in our new Town Plan. Some discussion of integrating class 4 roads, VAST, Pinnacle and town trails.

4. Municipal Planning Grant Continuation: Planning grant is due Nov 1 so we should write it in either the Aug and Sept meeting. Confer with WRC before formal submission.

5. Town Plan Review: Matt sent out a draft of the Townshend Town Plan. We can read but would need to comment collectively by consensus. Townsend's hazard mitigation plan was very impressive. Included small-scale hydro-systems. Question was asked about whether Townsend's plan mentioned anything about coordinating with nearby towns. There is a chapter in the town plan on neighbors so we can tie in Townsend there if useful. We need to make sure that our land use plans are compatible with Chester, Windham, Townsend, and Athens. Their maps may be accessible on the WRC website. Chapter 12 response to planning goals and policies and recommendations that had been in the previous plan. Discussion of some of that list (Wildlife continuity corridors. encourage forest industries. Encourage flood resilient communities. Improve culverts. Energy production such as solar. How is the WRC using the categories for land use. We should organize and mesh our categories with WRC's categories, but that may be difficult. It is understood that the new Town Plan is an aspirational document but we shouldn't put in goals that are not reasonable. There's a temptation to put in too much as a way

not to upset anyone. Most of the action items cannot be implemented without the enthusiastic support and engagement of the Selectboard. It's important to know that

the State can refer to the Town Plan when the town is acting on something. The wording that we choose should make a difference (for example, making reference to Act 250). In the past, there was an WRC plan to do "perpetually affordable" housing (maybe 20 units) on Eastman Rd. in the late 80s/90s but some Grafton residents opposed it and it didn't happen. Peter Pill (??) had an idea: we have 50 miles of roads, buy an acre off of some of the people who have enough land, and spread out the affordable housing. We might think about this kind of idea as an aspiration in the plan. Discussion of the new house that went up on Kidder Hill Road: did they need to go through any town agency re: septic, water, land use?

6. Water Committee Update on Water Testing: The water committee update. Matt e-mailed the consultant (a company that helps municipalities with water testing) and asked about PFAS issue and didn't receive a reply. Baseline should be regular testing. Planning Committee has a role in researching water treatment and mitigation. One of our most important resources. We can reach out to the Vermont Water Association.

7. Old Business: Rain gauges need to be a part of our hazard mitigation plan. Discussion of warning systems.

8. No New Business

9. No Public Comment

10. Next Meeting August 19, 2025