

## **Minutes Planning Commission Meeting August 11, 2015**

Attending: Matt Tell, Staley McDermet, Patti Smith, Bennett Grout, Edie Mas, Tim Segar, Kate Buttolph  
Mary Sargent (Zoning Administrator)

Matt called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm.

1. **Minutes**

Motion and second to approve minutes of July 14<sup>th</sup>. Approved unanimously.

2. **Communications:**

- a. VT League of Cities and Towns announcement of Town Fair in Killington Oct 8.
- b. Nothing from Verizon re: Notice of permit acceptance for bridge re: Verizon Tower application.
- c. Mary has agreed to be Flood Plain Administrator. Training Sept 3 8:30 – 4:00 in Marlboro Graduate Center, Brattleboro.
- d. Conservation Commission has not yet provided backup information for the Wildlife Crossings

3. **Zoning Bylaw Revisions**

A decision was made to devote the remainder of the meeting to a general discussion about the Wildlife Habitat Overlay District.

**Section 350 Wildlife Habitat Overlay District**

Staley said there were two outstanding issues for this district: shall or should wording in Section 350.4 #1, and the 500 feet limitation on permits without DRB review.

Tim talked about his feeling that perhaps it didn't make sense to have one size-fits-all approach to protecting wildlife habitat. Over the history of the town, most people seem to have been prudent and respectful of habitat, and actually there are very few houses that have been built beyond 500 feet without any zoning limitation. Perhaps the purpose more is to encourage responsible land practices, and give a broader opportunity for land owners, if they need to go to DRB, to have the ability to have some wiggle room. He also wondered if 500 feet is a supportable number. How had the Conservation Commission arrived at this recommendation?

Patti said that she recalled it came from discussions with Jeff Nugent over how many homes had actually been built over this limit- not many-, and an interpretation of the Town Plan's "Blob Map".

Edie stated again her concern that there could be a negative impact on the Town as a whole, and her feeling that a better approach would be to connect the Wildlife Crossing areas with each other in an overlay, that also might be more defensible and logical. Hence the importance of knowing that the crossings are justified by fact.

There was a general discussion about how many new houses have been built recently, and how many beyond 500 feet. Mary said that, from her perspective, there has definitely been a sizable increase in building in the recent years. Different impressions about how many beyond 500 feet.

Votes were taken on whether to use "shall" or "should" in section 2350.4#1. By unanimous vote the first shall was changed to should. By a vote 3 to 2 ( 2 abstaining), the second was changed to should. It now reads:

*Development should be located as close as possible to the State Highway or Class 1, 2, or 3 town road unless a less disruptive option is available, such as locating development in close proximity to existing development in the Wildlife Habitat Overlay District. Development should be located to leave the greatest contiguous land area within the District as undisturbed forest to provide wildlife habitat.*

A vote was taken on whether to establish a 500 foot on all roads for the Overlay District. 6 in favor and one opposed. Staley went over Sections 305-310, where the overlay is applied. Consensus that the Overlay should also apply to the EDU District.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm. Next meeting on August 25<sup>th</sup>, the regularly scheduled time, at 5:00 pm. Kate will not be present as she will be attending a workshop for new WRC commissioners.

Respectfully submitted, Edie Mas