

Draft Minutes Planning Commission Meeting April 26 , 2016

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

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

1. Minutes

Minutes of April 12th meeting approved unanimously.

2. Communications

- a. No written communication.
- b. Bennett reported on Emergency planning meeting he attended. The Entergy emergency system is no more; if people wish to be alerted, they should go to www.vtalert.gov/home. It is not automatic any more, and people can be specific how they want to be alerted.
- c. Staley will attend upcoming WRC public meeting on water resources and infrastructure on Thursday May 5th in Wilmington Town Offices.

3. Continuing Review of written comments from forums

Article III: Establishment of Zoning Districts and Zoning Map: Wildlife Overlay district

(note: chronological review of zoning draft stopped at p. 12, with variable lot sizes, so that there will need to be a review of pp 12-32, end of section 307 - section 346 at a later date)

- a. Staley started discussion by reviewing his suggestion to change “development” definition into two, “Building Development” and “Land Development”. (see p. 32 of draft zoning 4/12/16). There was a lively discussion reflecting comments made at the public forums, that people were in general good stewards and that proposed overlay restrictions were complicated, very restrictive of normal operations in land around a person’s dwelling, that would encourage acting outside of the law. Comments reflected that proposed “land development” definition, with its exemptions, was overly complicated with the detailed exemptions proposed.
- b. Decision made to keep present “development” definition for all the zoning, i.e.

The division of a parcel of land into two or more parcels; the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation or enlargement of any building or other structure; any mining, excavation, or land fill; and any change in the use of any building or other structure, or land, or extension of use of land.”

Then add a specific definition applicable to this section, as follows

???unnamed “development” , perhaps “Wildlife Overlay development”? : *The construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation or enlargement of any building or other structure; any mining, excavation, or land fill; and any change in the use of any building or other structure.*

Thus, restrictions on general land uses are not a part of “development” as mentioned in this section, the Wildlife Overlay District. The entire zoning document will need to be reviewed to make sure that the two types of “development” are mentioned appropriately and clearly distinguished.

c. Exemptions

As no land use is going to be restricted in the overlay district, decision made that agriculture, silviculture, forestry operations and current use did not need to be exempted(*this needs to be revisited, see note to PC)

Current exemptions were unchanged; in addition primitive camp and sugar house were added to exemptions.

- d. Tim mentioned that he also wanted to respond to Jim Herrick’s thoughtful comments on other ways property owners could protect their land from fragmentation and impacts on wildlife. He felt an additional role of the PC could be to educate around ownership practices that could be voluntarily undertaken by landowners to protect their land in this way. Edie mentioned that Jamie Fidel, from VNRC (Vermont Natural Resources Council) had come to a PC meeting with a list of such actions; she will look back and see if she can send this around again to PC.

- e. Comments that still need to be addressed for this section concern the timeline burden on the applicants to the DRB- the administrative burden to them of this. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

4. Maps

Edie and Staley went over various maps we will need for the public forum. Question whether the Surface Water Buffer, Shoreland Area, Wildlife Habitat, and Wildlife Road Crossing overlay districts could all be combined on one map, or perhaps two (Water and Wildlife). Edie will take this question to Jeff Nugent, along with Fluvial Hazard overlay map that will be needed.

5. Timeline

The existing timeline was reviewed, and decision made to make a goal of finishing up on the revisions to the draft ByLaws in May in order to get out 30-day notice of first public forum May 24, in order to have the forum in June.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10; next meeting May 10th, 5 pm at Town offices.

Respectfully Submitted, Edie