

**Brandon Planning Commission Meeting
September 17, 2018**

Board Members Present: Stephanie Jerome, Ethan Nelson, Michael Shank, Lisa Rovi

Board Members Absent: Bill Mills

Also in Attendance: Doug Bailey, Jeff Biasuzzi – Zoning Administrator, Mike Frankiewicz

1. Call to order

Stephanie Jerome, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:08PM.

2. Agenda Approval

A motion was made by Ethan Nelson to approve the agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Consent Agenda

a. Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – August 6, 2018

A motion was made by Michael Shank to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of August 6, 2018. **The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Zoning Administrator's Report

Jeff Biasuzzi advised that he is not sure if the new Sign ordinance is currently in effect, as he believes the changes do not take effect until 21 days after the adoption. Mr. Biasuzzi will confirm this item. Mr. Biasuzzi reported the DRB had three hearings last week, with one being the renewal of the Midway Oil Corporation project because they had a two-year period lapse due to different reasons and did not have the ability to use the substantial completion ordinance. Because the application was submitted under the old ordinance, it is a question for VLCT whether the new Sign ordinance would take precedence. Michael Shank noted if the project falls under the new ordinance, the signs would be more in line with the Town's ambiance. Mr. Biasuzzi provided a compilation of four towns' zoning ordinances to provide information regarding definitions. Mr. Biasuzzi provided the Planning Commission information on upcoming training seminars and requested anyone interested in attending to contact his office so that he could register them. He noted the Town will pay for registration and mileage for conference attendance. Mr. Biasuzzi noted the new Sign ordinance is easy to interpret. He suggested the BLUO Table of Contents be more complete. There was discussion of the interpretation of the Sign ordinance relative to the new microbrewery, as it has three windows and there was question of whether it is one sign per window area or one sign. Mr. Biasuzzi noted if each window is a sign area; the request is conforming. It was noted if the total area is less than 30%, the Planning Commission was in agreement. Mr. Biasuzzi noted the DRB will be deliberating the hearings. Michael Shank will provide the DRB with a copy of the new Sign ordinance. Doug Bailey advised there is a temporary moratorium on signs during construction through November 2019. It was questioned whether there could be changes required to existing signs and Mr. Biasuzzi noted those signs would be grandfathered. With regards to the Rite-Aid sign, Walgreens may just be changing the name of the existing sign. Mr. Shank will be meeting with the manager of Walgreen's in the near-term future to discuss signage. Ms. Jerome requested the Zoning Administrator keep a list of items in the BLUO where he would suggest changes.

5. BLUO Definitions Update

Ethan Nelson noted this is a large project and advised that he will review the information received from Mr. Biasuzzi and will work with him on this project. The definitions will be sorted by section in the

BLUO. Stephanie Jerome suggested placing all definitions at the end of the document. Mr. Nelson agreed it does make sense there should be rock solid, functional definitions.

6. BLUO Off-street Parking Update

Lisa Rovi reported she researched twelve towns and could not find anything regarding regulations for off-street parking. It was questioned whether an Off-Street Parking section is a necessary section to be included in the BLUO. This item will be confirmed with the Zoning Administrator. Doug Bailey stated there had been discussion of the off-street parking for the Smith Block, but he was not privy to the DRB meeting regarding the Smith Block.

7. BLUO Accessory Structures Update

Bill Mills will be providing an update of this section and discussion was postponed to a subsequent meeting due to Mr. Mill's absence.

8. Energy Plan Update

Stephanie Jerome requested Bill Moore provide the Planning Commission members Town of Brandon email addresses. Michael Shank reported the Energy Committee is getting close to developing a criteria list for solar development. Lowell Rasmussen has developed a questionnaire that solar companies will be encouraged to fill out for future projects. One benefit of the questionnaire is to set up a relationship with the Town. Edna Sutton and Mr. Shank met with Elaine Smith and Dave Atherton to discuss some preferred sites for solar development. The Energy Committee now has a list of sites and will be reaching out to property owners to determine if they are interested in being included in a list as potential solar sites. The Energy Committee is also organizing a workshop utilizing state resources on the energy efficiency front that include Efficiency Vermont and NeighborWorks. The workshop is scheduled for November 3rd. The event would include a presentation on how to retrofit a home and provide information on rebates regarding winter weatherization. Mr. Shank questioned the Town's policy with regard to committee member attendance. Doug Bailey suggested contacting the committee member, as the number of members is limited, and determine if they are still available to serve. If a member is unavailable, the Select Board can appoint another person.

9. RRPC Update

Stephanie Jerome reported Michael Shank is the RRPC representative from Brandon. Mr. Shank, Seth Hopkin and Stephanie Jerome will be attending the RRPC meeting tomorrow. At the meeting, the Conti Solar project will be discussed. Ms. Jerome advised Conti Solar had provided a presentation at an RRPC meeting. Ms. Jerome provided information on concerns regarding the Conti Solar project that includes: the settlement pattern, aesthetic impact, eliminating prime agricultural fields, not meeting adaptive reuse, public works issues due to a water main that travels through the fields and maintenance of trees along the roadside. Michael Shank suggested determining language that is appropriate to express the concerns of the Town with regard to this project and noted visibility appears to be the main area of concern. Ms. Jerome noted the Public Utilities Commission does have precedence over the municipal criteria. Ms. Jerome reported there are three archeological sites that have been located on the proposed project site. In the earlier plan, the project did not meet the setbacks, which has been changed. Ms. Jerome noted in the Town Plan, it indicates the Town does not want non-native species for screening. Doug Bailey stated there are many negative sentiments with regard to this project. Mr. Bailey noted this project has stationary equipment, which will be a less negative aspect of the project. Mr. Shank advised the Energy Committee has discussed the development of language for outlining the more positive types of projects desired by the Town. There will be discussions with the Town Manager and Economic Development Manager to develop this language. Doug Bailey noted Bill Moore and Dave Atherton are familiar with the Davenport Solar project and suggested Mr. Shank discuss the benefits of this positive energy project with them.

10. Old/New Business

Doug Bailey thanked the Planning Commission for the signage update in the BLUO, noting they did a very good job of the rewrite. Mr. Bailey challenged the Planning Commission to concentrate on the Energy section of the BLUO, due to the potential for future projects.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Monday, October 1, 2018 at 6:00PM – Brandon Town Hall – Planning Commission Meeting

9. Adjournment

The Committee Chair adjourned the meeting a 7:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary