

**Brandon Planning Commission Meeting
February 4, 2019**

Board Members Present: Ethan Nelson, Michael Shank, Bill Mills, Stephanie Jerome

Board Members Absent: Lisa Rovi

Others Present: Jeff Biasuzzi

1. Call to order

Michael Shank, Interim Planning Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:06PM.

2. Agenda Approval

A motion was made by Stephanie Jerome to approve the agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Consent Agenda

a. Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – January 7, 2019

A motion was made by Bill Mills to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of January 7, 2019. **The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Zoning Administrator's Report

Jeff Biasuzzi reported there have been 7 permits submitted since the last report. There are a couple of simple things coming to the DRB. He noted there has been a lot of activity with some new businesses and changes of use in some properties. There has been a request to convert a single-family residence into four units. Mr. Biasuzzi noted there is an incentive program through NeighborWorks for landlords to update their housing. There will be tax incentives on land gains and is something the Governor has proposed. There is a pilot project in the southern part of the State. It was noted the housing stock in Vermont is the second oldest in the country. Mr. Biasuzzi advised it is also intended for energy improvements to help with the State's energy quota. Michael Shank asked if the Town is encouraging people to view the State Energy Code. Barbara Noyes-Pulling stated that municipalities are not enforcing it. Mr. Biasuzzi noted there are no legal ramifications for enforcing the code, but suggested the incentive for the owner is long-term savings. It is suggested the Zoning Administrator provide the information when a permit application is received.

5. Planning Commission Membership

The Town Manager advised Michael Shank that Lisa Rovi was willing to serve on the Planning Commission until the end of her term in June. Mr. Shank reported Lowell Rasmussen has submitted a letter of interest to become a member of the Planning Commission. The Town Manager has indicated if Ms. Rovi is in support of resigning prior to the end of her term, the Select Board could consider the letter of support from Mr. Rasmussen. Mr. Shank will follow-up with the Town Manager on this subject.

6. Town Plan Review

Michael Shank reported the Town is still researching whether a Word documents exists for the Town Plan. Barbara Noyes-Pulling thought the RRPC has a version of the document and will forward it to the Commission Chair.

. River Corridors

Michael Shank stated River Corridors will become part of the Town Plan. Barbara Noyes-Pulling advised that this information can be placed in the Town Plan, but credit will not be given unless it is also in the Brandon Land Use Ordinance (BLUO). It was questioned what the difference is between the Fluvial Erosion Zone and the River Corridor. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised the River Corridor is much more extensive that includes small streams and provides a higher percentage through Emergency Relief Assistance Funding (ERAF). The State would like to see 50-foot setbacks on the small streams for new development. The River Corridor would prohibit new development, accessory structures and fill. It would not affect structures that are currently in place. Ms. Noyes-Pulling suggested a map could be developed to show where the current structures are located in the River Corridor. Ms. Noyes-Pulling stated Brandon could keep what is in the current BLUO, but by later this year there would need to be additional information added in order to obtain the additional ERAF funding for disasters due to the changes in erosion regulations. If the current wording is adopted, the Designated Downtown can be exempt as long as new buildings are not any closer to the current buildings. It was questioned if structures in the River Corridor will be required to get flood insurance and it was noted any loans used that are federally backed would require flood insurance. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised the River Corridor requirements are all about flooding. Mr. Biasuzzi advised that, similar to changes with the Town Plan, the same regulations would apply with regard to public hearings. The State has indicated that something more definitive will need to be done later this year. Mr. Shank noted there are limitations, but from a resiliency perspective, the change is necessary. Ms. Noyes-Pulling provided different iterations of the River Corridor language. Stephanie Jerome suggested the Town go with the most recent version to avoid having to go through the process again in the near-term future. It was suggested to substitute the current BLUO language with the most current version. Ms. Noyes-Pulling stated this could be a stand-alone ordinance or could be placed in the BLUO and noted it is much more robust and complicated than what the Town currently has, but provides a financial incentive to do it. Mr. Biasuzzi would prefer it as a separate ordinance. Mr. Shank stated this is a bigger community-wide issue at stake and the Town Manager had requested the Planning Commission move forward with this process. It was a consensus of the Committee to move forward with the State's most current version and Ms. Noyes-Pulling will email the newest version to the Committee Chair for the Planning Commission's review and submission to the Select Board.

7. Energy Plan Review

Michael Shank provided the draft document to the Committee members. Mr. Shank noted the maps are the remaining item that are in draft form, as the local constraints and preferred sites have not been mapped. Mr. Shank reported the preferred sites to be mapped are around 200 acres. Barbara Noyes-Pulling stated the preferred sites can be added by parcel and suggested the Planning Commission members could meet with Steve Shields at the RRPC to assist with the mapping. With regard to the constraints, Mr. Shank stated there are known and possible constraints in the Plan, but there will not be any additions to the Plan. It was suggested that research on protected view sheds be done sometime in the future. Ms. Noyes-Pulling suggested more text to prove that not too much land is taken out with regard to constraints to assure the Town will not be restricted from achieving its goals. Ms. Noyes-Pulling suggested the Committee Chair send Steve Shields a listing of the preferred sites to be placed on the maps. Mr. Shank will also send the current local constraint language. Mr. Shank noted the Energy Plan is a mix of goal-setting, assessment of energy use, recommendations for the Planning Commission, Town Manager and Energy Committee to promote activities with nothing injurious to the Town. Mr. Shank requested the Planning Commission members review the document. Ms. Noyes-Pulling provided a sample of a GMP map that provides input on towns' energy availability and it was the consensus of the Committee to include the map in the Plan. Mr. Shank will work with Ms. Noyes-Pulling to update the draft.

Mr. Shank stated there was discussion of doing a view shed analysis to include in the Energy Plan to protect the view sheds from development. Ms. Noyes-Pulling advised the Planning Commission could

come up with a list of potential view sheds that could be evaluated by a professional. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to authorize the Planning Commission Chair to have a conversation with the Select Board and Town Manager about this subject for soliciting public input concerning view sheds.

Jeff Biasuzzi suggested the Planning Commission get on the Select Board agenda to provide them an update of the process for the proposed Energy Plan.

A motion was made by Ethan Nelson to forward the proposed Energy Plan for the Town Plan to the Select Board for review after the maps have been updated. **The motion passed unanimously.**

A motion was made by Ethan Nelson to authorize the Planning Commission Chair to move forward with the Planning Commissions' hearing process for the proposed Energy Plan, once the draft has been reviewed. **The motion passed unanimously.**

8. RRPC Update

Michael Shank attended the RRPC meeting and reported Ed Bove gave a presentation on the Act 250 updates. Mr. Shank will share the presentation with the Planning Commission members. Stephanie Jerome noted trails may be impacted by Act 250.

9. BLUO Definitions Update

There was no discussion held.

10. BLUO Accessory Structures Update

There was no discussion held.

11. Old/New Business

There was no discussion held.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 6:00PM – Brandon Town Office – Planning Commission Meeting

13. Adjournment

The Committee Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:43PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary