

**Brandon Planning Commission Meeting - Draft  
February 3, 2025**

**Board Members Present:** Jack Schneider, Sara Stevens, Neil Silins, Natalie Steen

**Others Present:** Larry Stevens

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM by Jack Schneider - Chair.

**2. Agenda Approval**

A motion was made by Natalie Steen to approve the agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Approve or Amend Minutes from November 20, 2024 Public Hearing and December 2, 2024 Meeting**

A motion was made Natalie Steen to approve the November 20, 2024 Planning Commission Public BLUO Hearing and the December 2, 2024 meeting minutes, as amended. **The motion passed unanimously.**

A correction to the spelling of Novus Energy in the December 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting minutes.

**4. Public Participation and Comment**

There was no discussion held.

**5. Zoning Administrator's Report**

Larry Stevens reported there have been several permits received that have been approved and are in progress. They are basic permits like sign permits and subdivisions and none with any issues.

Jack Schneider asked if Mr. Stevens has received any questions about the revised BLUO. Mr. Stevens reported he has had some questions and one positive comment is that everyone is happy with the increase in structure size. He noted there is one section in the beginning of the BLUO that is confusing. In the first section, it indicates accessory structures no larger than 120 square feet can be five feet from the property lines and in another section, it indicates 80 square feet or less can be five feet from the property line. Jack Schneider noted the Commission will review these sections. Mr. Stevens stated another concern is the speed limit setbacks in Rural has increased to 60 feet on all property sides. He stated anyone with a long property because it is 35 miles per hour it has to be 60 feet, but with a structure far from the road he questioned what the speed limit has to do with it. Natalie Steen stated the reason is to avoid having skinny lots. Mr. Stevens stated in the Rural section, the minimum setback and state right of way is 60 feet if the speed limit is 30 to 40mph. Mr. Schneider noted in the prior version when the speed limit was 50mph, the setback was 100 feet. Mr. Stevens asked if that was the same in Rural as he could not find it in the prior version of the BLUO. Mr. Schneider asked if the new Act 250 rule has encouraged any building in Town. Mr. Stevens reported there has not been any permits that have come up that would involve Act 250, except for one project on Country Club Road that was previously subject to Act 250 for a change of use. Mr. Schneider noted Mr. Stevens' report for the Town Report was very good and advised the Town Report is currently available online.

**6. Possible Initiatives: Zoning Fee Schedule Research, Assist Historic Preservation Commission Update Town Workbook**

Jack Schneider noted over the last two years the Planning Commission has been working on the Town Plan and BLUO and requested input on the Commission's next projects. Mr. Schneider noted a couple of possibilities would be to assist

the Zoning Administrator in updating the price schedule for permits. This would require research of the abutting towns' fee schedules. Mr. Schneider noted he attended the last Historic Preservation meeting in January and is the first time that they have had a quorum since April. They will be working on revising the Town Workbook which has a lot of architectural guidelines that the Planning Commission was not able to get into this round of revisions for the BLUO. The last time the Workbook was updated was in 2002 and they hired an outside consultant from a grant received. Mr. Schneider noted likely 75% of the document does not need to be significantly reworked, but photos would need to be replaced. Mr. Schneider will follow up with Dennis Reisenweaver to determine if they would like the Planning Commission's assistance with the update. There is a potential grant from the SERF Foundation that could be applied for. Other sections of the Workbook that could be updated include parking and trees as there is now a committee in Town that is working to find more parking spaces and there is also now an active tree warden in Town. Natalie Steen stated some specific regulations could be created in zoning based on the Workbook. Neil Silins suggested the Commission could also review the other documents and determine what needs to be changed on a more unified approach. Mr. Schneider advised the Town Plan is updated every eight years and the BLUO is revised as needed in case the State passes more legislation that would require another update. Ms. Steen noted the BLUO can be amended at any time. Mr. Silins stated when working on the BLUO, he was missing the larger context which was his reason for suggesting a review of the other documents.

## **7. Update of Planning Commission Pages on Town Website**

Jack Schneider reviewed the Planning Commission pages on the Town's website and noted it has the updated BLUO. Mr. Schneider stated there are two websites for the Town and suggested that brandonvermont.gov is not a secure website, but brandonvermont.com is secure. Neil Silins questioned if .gov sites are run through a larger entity. Mr. Schneider noted the content was the same and the .gov was supposed to increase security but questioned whether it is a secure website. Mr. Schneider will reach out to Bill Moore regarding the new land use district map that Logan Solomon was to provide to Mr. Moore as the old map is still on the site.

## **8. Other Business**

Natalie Steen asked when Historic Preservation meets again. Mr. Schneider advised they will likely be meeting in March. It was suggested to invite Dennis Reisenweaver to the Planning Commission's next meeting following their March meeting.

## **9. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday, March 3, 2025 - 6:00PM – Brandon Town Hall

## **10. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Natalie Steen to adjourn the meeting at 6:25PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant  
Recording Secretary