

March 21, 2019

PC Members Present: Julie Potter (Chair), Jean Vissering, Kim Watson, Scott Hess, Zach Sullivan, Sui Tip Lam, Mark Lane, Jack Pauly

Others Present: Bruce Johnson (Zoning Administrator), Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary), Brandy Saxton, Clarice Cutler

Call to order: 7:02pm

Changes to Agenda – Berlin zoning regulations

Public Comment – None

Welcome New Planning Commission and Steering Committee Members

The Chair welcomed the newest PC member, Sui Tip Lam and the newest Steering Committee member, Clarice Cutler.

Zoning Update: Continued Discussion of Draft Zoning with Brandy Saxton, PlaceSense

The PC continued the review of Chapter 2 – Zoning Districts, starting with Section 2202 – River Corridor Overlay

- Flood = the flooding area, river corridor = captures where erosion might happen
 - Differences are in the administrative tasks not the underlying language
- River corridor state map is used; state now have a more formalized update process
- The regulations will include a disclaimer that the maps used are the official ones updated by FEMA/ANR
- Don't allow structures in the river corridor or buffers but encourage vegetation in the buffer
- Do we want to extend the buffers past where the state has mapped the streams?
- Ms. Saxton will merge this section with the riparian section regarding vegetation
- H – Exemptions
 - Demolition – language to prevent erosion, stabilize the soil – see Section 3007
 - Ms. Saxton will include illustrations
- I – District Standards
 - Permitted/conditional uses in underlying district but must also pass the test of these standards
 - Inside the designated village center – must not infringe any more than currently
 - Outside the village area, there are three options:
 - Close to the existing building, no closer to the river
 - Addition/accessory structure in shadow of existing structure
 - Have engineer certify that development will not harm the waterway
- J – Certificate of Compliance
 - Check in at the end of the project
- L – Definitions
 - Broader illustrations of difference between flood hazard and river corridor
- The PC discussed adding an overlay for high elevation areas to prohibit development on higher peaks for scenic value
 - Elevations over 1500' is a fairly small area
 - Ms. Saxton suggested adding restrictions to the subdivision and conditional use regulations where a building envelope cannot be located above elevation of 1500'; she will look at the contours to figure out the exact number to use

Maps

- The PC reviewed two versions of the district maps to bring to the public forum
 - Version 4 versus Version 5
 - The RL10 section includes conserved land, wetlands, contiguous forest blocks and land with no frontage
 - Version 4 has RL2 along County/Center Roads; Version 5 has RL3 along County/Center Roads
 - Concern with curtailing growth in town but septic constraints curtails most development
 - Both options have pros and cons
 - The PC agreed to bring both options to the public forum
- During a discussion on density, Ms. Saxton discourages adding a provision to put multiple single-family homes on one lot; it is hard for both administration and landowners
 - Initial subdivision density will be noted on the plat; if zoning changes, landowners would come back to the town for a plat amendment
 - This provision is only allowed in the RL10 district where there is not a lot of development potential anyway
 - Ms. Watson is concerned with neighboring towns zoning differently beside our borders

Remaining timeline

- The current grant requires that we submit a draft, including public engagement, by May 31, 2019
- The PC would like to schedule at least one public forum by the beginning of May; look at May 2 or May 9
 - The PC looks to get feedback on proposed districts and an overview of the proposed changes
- April 4 – annual organization meeting
- April 18 – review presentation for the public forum

Planning Commission Rules of Procedure and Ethics

The PC reviewed the draft document and will adopt at the next meeting.

Updates

- Hazard Mitigation Plan – 60 people filled out the survey; the committee met with the SB and the consultant from the CVRPC and the plan should be completed by late spring
- Energy Committee – no update
- Rural Roads Vegetation Assessments PAC – Ms. Vissering reported there was a meeting in April but Calais is struggling so they are holding off for now
- Old LaPerle Farm Property Committee – no update

Discussion on Recommendation of PC Member to Fill DRB Vacancy

Carol Welch declined to be reappointed to the DRB so there is a vacancy. The Chair asked if any PC member was interested; Ms. Watson and Mr. Lane currently serve on the DRB. There was no additional interest from the PC so the ZA will send out notices to the public for interest.

ZA Report

Two new permits

DRB Report

Next meeting is scheduled for April 9 – two hearings (Coburn and Laquerre)

Review Minutes

March 7, 2019

Motion: I move to approve the minutes as written. Made: Mr. Hess, second: Ms. Vissering

Vote on Motion: Passed 8-0

Training/Conferences

- Community and Economic Development Forum, March 27, 2019, Burke Mountain – let the ZA know if interested in attending
- Caring for Your Woods Pancake Breakfast, March 30, 2019, 9am-1pm, Twinfield School; sponsored by CVRPC and Water Wise Woodlands

Motion to Adjourn. Made: Ms. Watson, second: Mr. Lane. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:25p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Secretary