

**Brandon Planning Commission**  
**November 18, 2013**

**Planning Commission Members Present:** Marty Feldman, Jeff Guevin, Linda Stewart, Anne Bransfield, Tracy Wyman

**Others present:** Charlene Bryant, Tina Wiles

**Call to Order:**

Anne Bransfield called the meeting to order at 7:09PM.

**Approve Meeting Minutes for November 4, 2013:**

A motion was made by Marty Feldman and seconded by Jeff Guevin to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2013 meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**Public Comment Period**

Tina Wiles stated the Flood Charette that she attended in Norwich was very interesting. Peg Elmer and some other planners are trying to write a manual geared towards Vermont for people's use in the future for repairing structures affected by floods. Flood planners, architects, students and homeowners were in attendance and the goal was to look at different scenarios and provide recommendations for the various scenarios. These scenarios will include the recommendations that were developed at the Charette. A follow-on meeting will be held, with the timeline for the completion of the guidebook to be December.

**Action Items:**

***1. Draft Sidewalk and Merchandise Display Ordinance***

The Commission members suggested the signage changes be done in conjunction with the development of Form Base Codes. Mr. Wyman expressed concerns about signage outside the central business district having the same regulations as those within the CBD. He also noted he does not have a problem with lit signs in businesses, as long as the signs are lit only when the businesses are open. With regard to sandwich board signs, the clearance width of the sidewalks was discussed. Tina Wiles stated the ADA compliance for sidewalk clearance in the central business district is five feet. Ms. Wiles noted she has been working with the downtown businesses regarding flags and facade signs. There was concern noted with the signs located at the car dealer north of town and the off-premise signs for the winery located on Route 73. Jeff Guevin suggested the Sidewalk Sign and Merchandising ordinance be part of the Public Use ordinance and not part of the BLUO. This ordinance should not address signs that are part of a building; only signs that are in the town's right of way.

Mr. Wyman stated signs that are behind the windows of businesses should at the discretion of the business owners. Marty Feldman noted there should be some minimum standards maintained, as there needs to be some enforceability.

Jeff Guevin provided the Commission members links to information concerning signs. Ms. Bransfield is interested in researching the information available regarding signs. Ms. Wiles stated the town does not have

major sign issues and the most predominant issue is with illuminated signs. Mr. Feldman noted there is very good information available in the Brandon Workbook regarding signs.

Tina Wiles asked if it is the intent of the Planning Commission to implement the Wildlife Corridor into the current ordinance. She noted nominal changes to the sign ordinance could be made at the same time. Ms. Wiles stated the hearing notices cost approximately \$100.00 and is a time-consuming process. It will be more cost efficient to act upon more than one item at a time. Marty Feldman would prefer to address the sign ordinance now, as the businesses have come to the Planning Commission requesting consideration of this ordinance.

Tina Wiles noted there are two separate ordinances and the changes would be similar to both documents. Ms. Wiles will draft proposed changes to the sections in both documents and fold the Sidewalk Sign and Merchandise Display ordinance into the Facility Use ordinance. Ms. Wiles will include a statement using conditional use criteria for the review process and waivers will also be done at the same time.

## ***2. Brandon Based Code Status***

Anne Bransfield has requested a meeting with Robin Bennett and Devon Fuller to discuss the financing of the Form Based Code project. Ms. Bransfield would like to start work on the capital plan and the town plan, but a resolution to the Brandon Base Code project financing will need to be resolved prior to proceeding with the other projects.

## ***3. Wildlife Corridor Draft for Final Planning Commission Review***

Linda Stewart stated the meeting that Tracy Wyman and she attended was a different discussion from what has been previously discussed regarding wildlife corridor planning. This discussion included information on open space plans. Mr. Wyman noted there were many different strategies discussed. There was discussion about the development of conservation funds and conservation committees. Other topics of discussion were about possible tax breaks and incentives, and how to encourage and regulate cluster housing. Jeff Guevin will complete the final draft of the Wildlife Corridor for review by the Planning Commission at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

### **Other Business as Needed:**

#### ***1. Town office Location***

Anne Bransfield stated Robert Black has questioned if the location of the town office would possibly be written into the town plan and whether the Planning Commission has a stand. It was the consensus of the Commission members that a recommendation on the town office location would not be forthcoming from the Planning Commission.

#### ***2. Front Porch Forum Participation***

Anne Bransfield noted the Planning Commission relies heavily on Jeff Guevin to handle the Commission's communications. The Planning Commission members were encouraged to join Front Porch to participate in discussions that are taking place regarding local activities and information.

### ***3. Schedule Next Town-wide Group Work Session in January***

The next town-wide group work session will be scheduled for sometime late January. Bernie Carr has agreed to co-moderate the session with Robert Black.

### ***4. Rural Recreation Planning Conference Opportunities***

Anne Bransfield reported Bill Moore, Jeff Guevin and she attended a rural recreation planning conference at Sugarbush. They brought back some ideas that could generate activities for children and adults at a low cost to the town. There will be a process developed to enhance recreation areas in the Town Plan. There has been discussion about determining access areas to the Neshobe River. Tina Wiles reported the demolition of 114 Wheeler Road will be done next week and the Rutland Audubon Society has provided funds for doing a bird habitat in the area. Ms. Wiles will be submitting a Watershed grant for this effort. There may be the possibility of a state access at the Carl Fjeld property as well.

### **Upcoming Training Opportunities**

*. November 19<sup>th</sup> – VLCT Fall Conference in Montpelier*

#### **Next Meetings:**

December 2<sup>nd</sup> – Regular Planning Commission Meeting

December 16<sup>th</sup> – Regular Planning Commission Meeting

#### **Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Anne Bransfield and seconded by Linda Stewart to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:35PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlene Bryant  
Recording Secretary