

Brandon Planning Commission
August 20, 2012

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

Others present: Charlene Bryant, Tina Wiles

Anne Bransfield called the meeting to order at 7:07PM.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Linda Stewart and seconded by Jeff Guevin to approve the July 2, 2012 minutes as amended. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Zoning Activity Report:

Tina Wiles distributed the new VSA, Tile 24 Chapter 117 document. As an update, Ms. Wiles noted she has been involved with witness testimony on a boundary fence construction dispute. She has also been attending the Segment 6 meetings. Ms. Wiles has also been working with people regarding flood repairs. There will be a DRB hearing Wednesday night to discuss one application relating to the Otter Creek hazard area and three applications are related to setbacks on accessory structures. Marty Feldman questioned the status of the DBA meetings. Linda Stewart reported there had been a letter written concerning Segment 6 that includes 120 signatures, and the letter will be placed in the newspaper. It was noted that nothing definitive has happened. Jeff Guevin questioned if the town has submitted the paperwork to the Regional Planning Commission with regard to his appointment to the Regional Commission. Tina Wiles will draft a letter to the Regional Planning Commission regarding Mr. Guevin's appointment as Brandon's Representative. Linda Stewart stated she has noticed more sign violations at Rite Aid and the storage unit business. Tina Wiles stated the storage unit property is properly zoned and is not in violation. Anne Bransfield asked Ms. Wiles to advise the Planning Commission when the members' terms are expiring. Tina Wiles questioned if more Planning Commission members are required and also requested Ms. Bransfield ask Phyllis Aitchison to submit to the Select Board her letter of resignation from the Planning Commission.

Proposed BLUO Amendment:

Jeff Guevin provided proposed revisions to the BLUO districts, in an effort to protect the Aquifer, Central Business, High-density/Multi-use and Rural Development with regard to Commercial II uses. He stated it is basically shrinking the Commercial II district and he does not feel that it fits the purpose of any of the districts. Tina Wiles expressed concern that the proposed changes would impact economic development significantly and is closing the door on any businesses that hire more than 5 employees. Linda Stewart stated there should be more districts and this amendment would provide a stop-gap measure until the new zoning is completed. Jeff Guevin stated under the current zoning, there could be changes that would undue a lot of work that will be done in the next three to six months. Tina Wiles noted the changes would shut the door on any business over 10,000 feet and if the purpose of the Town Plan is to encourage new businesses and employ people, this restriction is limiting the potential businesses. Marty Feldman agreed with Ms. Wiles that the amendment appears to be anti-business. Tina Wiles noted the Historical Society building in Park Village has been purchased with the intent of renovating it into a residential care facility; however, the suggested amendment would prohibit this. It was stated this project would not have an adverse effect on the environment and it does appear to be commercial, however, Ms. Wiles advised the project would be determined by square footage and based on the size of the building, it would be a commercial use. Ms. Wiles stated there is an issue in that the Industrial Park is not in compliance with the zoning. It was noted there is not an appropriate definition for this type of project.

Tina Wiles stated the Town Plan is nearly five years old and there are some things that need to be fixed, based on the RPC meeting in adding additional districts. There used to be 9 districts and if added back in, it may solve some of the issues. Jeff Guevin noted the High-density, Multi-use zoning does not match up with the Town Plan. Tina Wiles stated there have been issues with the Industrial Park that needs to be cleared up, as these issues could affect potential buyers. Ms. Wiles suggested the Planning Commission begin with determining the districts in their process of implementing Form Base codes. A suggestion was made for the board members to further review the document and table for discussion at a subsequent meeting.

A motion was made by Jeff Guevin and seconded by Anne Bransfield to table the discussion of the suggested BLUO amendments to a subsequent meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Municipal Planning Grant Update:

Anne Bransfield reported she will be attending at meeting with Ed Bove and Paul Dreyer at the Regional Planning Commission to discuss the Municipal Planning grant that has a deadline of September 28th. After Wednesday's meeting, she will have a draft to share with the Commission members. Linda Stewart asked Ms. Bransfield to request a start date for the project. Tina Wiles believes the application requires e-filing and is unsure if the town has an account. Ms. Wiles suggested Ms. Bransfield advise her after the meeting whether e-filing is required and she will open an account. Tina Wiles noted the town pays to be a member of the Regional Planning Commission, which includes this type of assistance from the Regional Commission. Ms. Wiles suggested within these discussions requesting the inclusion of the necessary changes to update the Town Plan in conjunction with the ordinance changes.

Form Based Codes Discussion:

A discussion was held concerning Mary Feldman's proposed draft letter to the public concerning Form Base codes. Mr. Feldman suggested publicly announcing the proposed changes would be advantageous for the process. It was the consensus of the Committee to move forward with the distribution of the letter. Jeff Guevin also proposed providing Charettes at the various public meetings such as the Select Board, DBA and Brandon Chamber. Tina Wiles suggested the Planning Commission take charge of their own Charettes, as the form-base codes should have nothing to do with the Segment 6 project. It was suggested to distribute Mr. Feldman's letter to the Select Board, Brandon Chamber of Commerce, DBA and to post it on the town's website. It was also suggested to place it in the newspaper as a public notice. Tina Wiles suggested having a booth at the August 28th voting and providing handouts to the public. Ms. Wiles stated the next Select Board meeting is scheduled for August 27th and stated the Commission could request to be on the agenda to present the information to them. Jeff Guevin volunteered to assemble the list of people for distribution. Tina Wiles will submit the letter to The Reporter, add an agenda item to the Select Board meeting, place the letter on the town's website and do the bulk mailing after receipt of the distribution list from Mr. Guevin.

Other Business as Needed:

Linda Stewart reported that at a prior Select Board meeting, there had been a discussion about the Lowell Mountain Turbine Project. There was a request that the town write a letter in opposition to this project. Tina Wiles stated there has to be ridge line development restrictions, which are subject to Act 250, but there is nothing expressed in the town's ordinance. Ms. Wiles suggested the Wildlife Connectivity Corridor will have an impact on these types of projects, however, in the Town Plan there are comments encouraging energy conservation measures. Ms. Stewart stated in the presentation, it was noted they are working on Grandpa's

Knob and may eventually be moving towards this area. It was suggested the Planning Commission recommend to the Select Board that they are not in favor of turbine projects in the Brandon area.

Anne Bransfield summarized that she will start the Municipal Planning Grant process. Tina Wiles stated in the meantime, the Planning Commission needs to define the districts. She would also like to look at the Planned Unit Developments (PUD) and amend those that can be. Jeff Guevin stated the Commission needs to line up the community meetings; however, information is needed from Paul Dreyer. Tina Wiles suggested asking Ed Bove whether the Committee can start working with Paul Dreyer prior to approval of the grant. Tina Wiles also noted the DBA has been in contact with Lyman Orton with regard to the Orton Family Foundation "Heart and Soul" Program to determine if Brandon is eligible for this program. Anne Bransfield hopes to have an update on the grant process for the Committee by next Wednesday.

Public Comment Period:

There was no discussion held.

Next Meetings:

September 17, 2012 @ 7PM at the Brandon Library.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Anne Bransfield and seconded by Linda Stewart to adjourn the meeting at 8:50PM.
The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary