

**Brandon Planning Commission
Work Session
February 19, 2013**

Planning Commission Members Present: Anne Bransfield, Jeff Guevin

Planning Commission Members Absent: Linda Stewart, Marty Feldman

Others present: Charlene Bryant

Call to Order:

Anne Bransfield called the meeting to order at 7:15PM.

Planning Commission Work Session:

With regard to the next Wildlife Corridor meeting, Paul will not be needed at the next session, but Kate should be present. Jeff provided the following draft outline for consideration:

Purpose:

Minimize human impacts on wide-ranging mammal species that use the Wildlife Corridor that runs through Brandon, connecting habitat from New York to New Brunswick.

Basic Premise:

Keep connected forests, which provide cover to roaming animals, connected.

Main Threats:

Roads and cleared land

(For each of the following, consideration of whether they should be pursued, and if so should it be mandatory or merely aspirational)

Town Plan:

- Standards for town and VTrans to following road constructions
- Grants for culvert and other projects to allow smaller-scale migrations (frogs and fish)
- Tax stabilization for owners of large-lot properties to minimize subdivision
- Establish a town conservation fund
- Assistance from the Town on easements and other landowner-led efforts

Zoning Overlay:

- Existing development
 - o Maintain existing hedgerows

- Limit clearing
 - Provide for clearing off-sets/mitigation
- New Development
- Subdivision standards (administrative)
 - Allow conservation subdivisions that maximize habitat connectivity
 - Prohibit or restrict subdivisions that require long rights-of-way or create scattered lots or long “spaghetti” lots
 - Site-plan review(administrative) - currently there are none
 - Limit construction
 - Provide for clearing off-sets/mitigation
 - Limit driveway lengths
 - Limit driveway widths
 - Mitigation option: encourage preservation of stands or trees (planted or left uncleared) across roads from other stands
 - Prohibit adoption of new town highways
 - Prohibit upgrades to new town highways
 - Require approved forest-management plans for non-current-use woodlots
 - Encourage maintaining hedgerows where people can

As far as scheduling, Kate suggested next week would be good for her or Brian from VNRC. Jeff will email Kate to schedule another meeting in two weeks. At town meeting, a table could be set up with information on the project. There could be a sign up sheet for people who are interested in participating in the meetings. Anne will contact Paul for a list of landowners in the area of the Wildlife Corridor. Anne will question Keith Arlund whether the Planning Commission could have funds for postage. The public notices of special meetings need to be in the paper, at the town clerk, plus two other places in town (the bulletin board next to the old town office and Dave’s store in Forestdale, similar to the other warned municipal meetings.

Jeff has developed a tentative list of districts and corridors, tentative transects and tentative site visit planning for approval and adoption; with the suggestion that the site visits be scheduled for each member of the Planning Commission to complete.

Jeff would also like to determine what the Planning Commission is going to do about a consultant for assistance with the Brandon Base Codes. The Planning Commission does not have the funds to support a consultant. The Regional Planning Commission will provide some measure of help. It was suggested to talk with Robert Black to be a facilitator for the meetings. In March, the Planning Commission will schedule a meeting with all the local groups who have indicated they would be willing to help. A presentation will be done for discussion purposes that will include visuals to review and discuss. It would be good to have all site visits completed prior to this meeting to show progress towards the finished project. This meeting would be scheduled after the Planning Commission meeting in March. This will provide time to do the Wildlife Corridor information and do the site visits. The areas for the site visits include: Park Street and Pearl Street, Prospect Hill, Grove Street and Franklin Street, parts of Union and Champlain Streets. Anne will work on a presentation for the architects to provide ideas for neighborhoods and transects. It is thought the process will be a hybrid, rather than strictly form-based codes, as the program needs to fit the town.

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A final Wildlife Corridor meeting will be scheduled for the first Thursday in March and the March regular Planning Commission meeting will be scheduled for the 3rd Tuesday of March. The Planning Commission will tentatively plan to meet with the architects the last week of March to discuss the Brandon Base Codes' next steps. Anne will contact Keith Arlund regarding video-taping the architects' meeting. Anne will also continue to stay in touch with the local groups, such as the Rotary and Brandon Chamber of Commerce.

. *Sign Ordinance and sidewalk displays*

This item could not be discussed without the entire committee. Tina Wiles would like to make some changes to the existing ordinance.

Next Meetings:

- . *March 7, 2013 – Final Wildlife Corridor Discussion w/Refreshments – Brandon Town Hall – 6:45PM*
- . *March 19, 2013 – Planning Commission Meeting – Brandon Library – 7:00PM*
- . *Week of March 25th (Date and time TBD) – Brandon Library Upstairs Conference Room (If available)*

Adjournment:

The work session meeting adjourned at 8:05PM.

Respectfully submitted

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary