

FINAL
Brandon Planning Commission
February 3, 2014

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

Others present: Charlene Bryant, Tina Wiles, Bernie Carr

Call to Order:

Anne Bransfield called the meeting to order at 7:05PM.

Approve Meeting Minutes for February 3, 2014:

A motion was made by Linda Stewart and seconded by Marty Feldman to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2014 meeting, as amended. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Page 2 – 1st sentence - eliminate (Double Check Direction)

Page 2 – 5th sentence – amended to read the motion passed unanimously

Page 2 – 7th sentence – correction from VASS trails to VAST trails and a correction from track to trail standards

Page 2 – 10th sentence – a correction from CBD Merchandise Display Ordinance to read Central Business District Sidewalk Sign and Merchandise Display Ordinance

Public Comment Period

There was no discussion held.

Action Items:

1. Set Dates for Hearings – Central Business District Sidewalk sign and Merchandise Display Ordinance and Section 407 Revision of the Sign Ordinance

Tina Wiles distributed copies of the letters sent to the Brandon Select Board Chair and to Bernie Carr on behalf of the Brandon Chamber of Commerce regarding the CBD Sidewalk Sign and Merchandise Display Ordinance and the revisions to Section 407 of the Brandon Land Use Ordinance (BLUO).

Mr. Carr requested clarification of the following items in Section 407 of the BLUO:

Under Definitions, #24 – Off Premise Signs – It was noted this relates to a business placing a sign on someone else's premise. Mr. Carr questioned if something can be done for the Park Village property. Tina Wiles reported that she is drafting a letter to Compass providing suggestions for the signage. She noted their entrance needs updating. They have a freestanding sign and the development could have a clustered sign that could include arrows for directing people to the various locations. Ms. Wiles also advised there can be a cluster sign at each entrance to direct people to the building and directory signs are also possible.

Under Definitions, #41 – Window Signs – It was noted that window signage cannot exceed 30% of the window area. Free standing signs and clustered signs cannot be product signs. This ordinance does not ban product

signage. Mr. Carr thought it is a personal preference for the business owners if they want to fill their windows with signage. He is not sure why it is the Planning Commission's area of control. Tracy Wyman agreed with Mr. Carr that anything inside the building should not be controlled. Mr. Guevin suggested leaving the ordinance as written and obtain public comment on this subject.

Under Section C – Mr. Carr questioned how colors can be included in this section, as this is a personal opinion and expressed concern that this is one of the criteria. Tina Wiles stated when reviewing an application, it is not something that would be used to base a determination on. The wording conforms to Item #11 – Gas Station Canopies that states the canopy color should blend with the building.

Mr. Carr questioned what the appeal process would be in the case of a denial of an application. If denied, the owner would appeal to the Development Review Board (DRB) to state their case. The DRB would either uphold the position of the Zoning Administrator or they would indicate an error is made and authorize the approval of the permit. The owner also has the option of going to the Environmental Court.

Mr. Carr questioned whether there was a decision to change the criteria for signage outside of the business district due to the increased traffic speed. Tina Wiles reported there had been a change in the total square footage of the signage to allow for the signs to be larger. It was noted the Sign Ordinance was developed to maintain the appearance of town. Mr. Carr noted that one person thinks is tasteful is a matter of opinion. Mr. Wyman agreed that some of the restrictions are a little off. There is a need for the community participation at the hearings. It was noted the Planning Commission is trying to find a balance in a way to try to market the town without telling the business owners how to run their businesses. Mr. Carr stated the Chamber has the same intent in trying to build more business and he is trying to trouble shoot what might come up for questions.

It was noted there should be an addition of the statutory reference under Prohibited Signs.

Bernie Carr stated the Chamber is in agreement with the Central Business District Sidewalk Sign and Merchandise Ordinance.

A cleaned up draft of the ordinance will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the hearing. Tina Wiles will also provide a copy of the Setback Waiver to the Planning Commission for review at the next Planning Commission meeting.

A motion was made by Tracy Wyman and seconded by Linda Stewart to set a hearing for adding Section 1016 (Setback Waiver) and changes to Section 407 of the Brandon Land Use Ordinance for March 10, 2014 @ 6PM at the Brandon Town Hall. **The motion passed unanimously.**

2. Draft Brandon Based Code

The draft of the Brandon Based Code was distributed to the Planning Commission. The information provided was the text only; however, Ms. Saxton had provided additional documents with the text draft. The Planning Commission will continue working on the project and will solicit the help of other qualified people in town.

3. Municipal Planning Grant – Request for Proposals

Anne Bransfield stated an RFP will be required to assist with the remainder of the Brandon Based Code project. The MPG funds can be used for continuing the public process, but cannot be used for the technical aspects of the program. The RFP will be for the work plan outlined in the Municipal Planning Grant. Tina Wiles to provide the RFP form to Anne Bransfield.

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4. Northeastern Transportation and Wildlife Conference Proposal

Anne Bransfield advised that information was received from the Vermont Planners Association regarding grant opportunities. It was suggested that one of the grant options could be to apply for funding of postage for outreach to the public. The grant would be up to \$500.00 with a 50/50 match and would provide a good way to communicate with the public on the Wildlife Corridor project.

It was suggested that the Planning Commission could enlist the services of Steve Schild, GIS Manager with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission to demonstrate mapping at a future public event.

5. Energy Social

Jeff Guevin stated the Town Plan needs additional support for transportation and energy. He included these areas in the Municipal Planning Grant with a goal to begin obtaining information that will help write the Town Plan relating to energy. There are several different energy projects being discussed and Mr. Guevin suggested doing an event to obtain public comment on these projects. There could be a similar event held for transportation at a later date. The Town Plan indicates that it supports Segment 6, but there needs to be information to educate people on what it is going to do in town.

Other Business as Needed:

. RRPC Green Infrastructure Opportunity – Brandon Stream Team

Anne Bransfield met with Ethan Swift, Ed Bove and Fred Nicholson, Acting Director of Rutland Regional Planning Commission to review potential sites for future grant opportunities relating to green infrastructure projects. There was a prior grant relating to this subject and a review of the various sites was completed to enable Brandon to be prepared for future grant opportunities. The sites under consideration include the area at the end of the parking lot behind Cafe Provence, the area near the wastewater treatment plant, the area near the golf course, Newton Road near the old Vermont Tubbs plant, behind Aubuchon Hardware and the area at the beginning of Wheeler Road. It was noted that the Wheeler Road Project currently has funding through CDBG.

. Schedule Quarterly Joint Workshop Group Meeting – Possible Dates and Agenda

It was suggested that an invitation be extended to the town groups to assist with the proposed Energy Social that was previously discussed in the meeting.

. General Discussion

There was discussion of town owned property. It was noted there was discussion during the town budget meetings of the possibility for selling some of the town property to generate revenue. Mr. Wyman stated there is a 400-acre forest that is owned by the town near the Wyman property. There are also several properties that are swamp land. There has been interest expressed in purchasing some of the properties for hunting purposes. Adjoining property owners have also expressed interest in purchasing some of the town parcels that are landlocked. There are also a lot of unknown properties.

Next Meetings:

February 17th – Regular Planning Commission Meeting
Brandon Planning Commission Meeting
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March 17th – Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Linda Stewart and seconded by Marty Feldman to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:50PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary