

**Brandon Planning Commission Meeting
November 2, 2015**

Planning Commission Members Present: Jeff Guevin, Frank Bump, Linda Stewart, Marty Feldman

Planning Commission Members Absent: Phyllis Aitchison, Anne Bransfield

Others present: Anna Scheck, Jeff Stewart, Doug Bailey

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Jeff Guevin, Planning Commission Chair.

Agenda Approval:

A motion was made by Jeff Guevin and seconded by Marty Feldman to approve the agenda as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of Prior Meeting and Hearing Minutes:

A motion was made by Linda Stewart and seconded by Marty Feldman to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2015 Planning Commission meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Old Business:

. Zoning Administrator Report

Anna Scheck provided an update on the previously discussed rat issue. She advised this is due to an agricultural practice and the Town cannot control that, except in the instance of a health violation. The State has indicated that careful consideration has to be given with the subject of what people can or cannot do with chickens. Jeff Guevin stated as the Zoning Administrator she cannot deal with agricultural issues, but as the Health Officer she could intervene. It was noted that the chicken coop area has been inspected and is very clean. Mr. Guevin suggested going forward that something could be put in as a standalone ordinance. Ms. Scheck stated this is something that the Planning Commission should review and potentially there could be changes made.

. Sign Ordinance

Anna Scheck reported she sent out three sign ordinance violations to Foley Winery, Mae's Place and the Compass Treasure Chest. Ms. Scheck stated the nursery next to the town office also has put up a sign and she will be contacting them regarding this sign. Ms. Scheck also provided information to the Planning Commission regarding the proposed solar site in Brandon. She has recently attended a workshop regarding solar sites and wind turbines. She advised it is important to come up with something that specifies where the acceptable sites would be. Linda Stewart provided a copy of an article about what Addison County is going to do about solar in the future.

. Town Plan Adoption Timeline

Jeff Guevin stated there should be a discussion of whether there needs to be further revisions beyond grammar and spelling changes to the Town Plan. Linda Stewart asked when the Plan can be approved by the Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC). Mr. Guevin stated the Plan would have had to be warned by last week

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and it will now be unable to be approved until January. Elysa Smigielski of the RRPC stated it would be required to have additional hearings if substantive changes are made. It was noted that late November the solar company is planning to submit their application for the Brandon site. Ms. Stewart stated if the hearing is done in the first part of December, the Select Board could then do their hearings during the month of December. Doug Bailey stated the budget process was started two months earlier which will provide time for the Select Board to work on other items. He noted the Town Plan is important and the Select Board could do the two hearings whenever they are required. Mr. Bailey read the Town Plan and thinks the product is good. He knows that it is important to get it done for the grant process and suggested continuing with the current plan and not do a complete rewrite. The Select Board would go along with the process of whatever the Planning Commission has suggested. Jeff Guevin stated Ethan Swift wants the Planning Commission to meet with Daryl Burlett regarding the town projects. Mr. Bailey stated with regard to the solar site, the Select Board was just advised of this project. He does not like the small solar projects and finds them unattractive. He is concerned if the Town does not get something in line, it will be littered with small projects. It was noted there cannot be enforcement on the smaller projects. Mr. Bailey is more opposed to the smaller sites than the one larger one and noted the proposed site cannot be seen from Route 7, is out of the way and there is likely no development that will be done in that area. Linda Stewart stated there should be something in the Plan about screening. Mr. Guevin stated that the companies doing the larger projects will likely be including screening. It was noted that the Syndicate Road could potentially be upgraded. It was thought that the solar company seems willing to negotiate the items that include improvement tax, road improvement and the upgrade of fire equipment. Anna Scheck stated she would also like to see one large project, but if the Town does not address any issues of concern, there could be problems in the future. Ms. Stewart stated something should be included in the Town Plan with regard to solar. Anna Scheck advised that she has some model language that she could provide to the Planning Commission. Jeff Guevin will wordsmith something into the Town Plan for consideration. Marty Feldman suggested getting the current Plan approved and then amend the Plan to avoid holding up any grant process. Mr. Guevin stated the Plan could not be approved at this point until January, but there was concern that an adjustment could likely not be submitted to the RRPC until after mid-January, with the RRPC approval being delayed until February. The timing requirements are 30 days prior to the hearing; the Plan has to be submitted to all of the required parties, followed by a 30 day waiting period. After the hearing, there is another 30 day waiting period and then the Select Board could hold their hearings. A Municipal Planning Grant and any grants that are federal money administered by the state require a Regional Planning Commission approved Town Plan. It was noted that a letter of intent was signed for a Municipal Planning grant. Doug Bailey advised that he spoke to Dave Atherton about grants and it is the desire of the Town to complete the current grants before applying for new grants. It was noted a delay in the process would also hold up the Zoning Ordinance, as it could not be adopted until the Town Plan is approved. Anna Scheck stated the Public Service Board only considers town plans and not zoning ordinances. Jeff Guevin stated there are likely no areas in the Brandon area that would qualify for wind towers and what is in the Plan is sufficient for wind projects. It was noted that something about ridge line development for solar could be included in the Plan. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to move forward with changes to the Town Plan relative to solar projects. Mr. Guevin stated he would be in favor of not putting projects along Route 7 and Route 73, as they are the two main roads into Town that could affect the tourist economy. It was recommended to include natural screenings, rather than fences, due to the wildlife. Mr. Guevin stated if building on language that is already in the Plan, it may not be considered a substantive change. This will be clarified with the RRPC. Mr. Guevin stated the Planning Commission could schedule a hearing to discuss the solar changes, even if a hearing is not required due to substantive changes.

. Further Revisions to Town Plan, If Applicable

Jeff Stewart stated the vision paragraph is a very important paragraph of the Town Plan and asked the Planning Commission to reconsider going back to the original wording of “Brandon is an intimate, warm, and walkable

small town, including a compact and full service downtown.” The Planning Commission will take this under advisement. Linda Stewart will provide Jeff Guevin with the grammatical changes that she noticed and suggested that titles should be added to the graphs. Jeff Guevin stated there were titles on all of the graphs and he has changed the font to make them larger. Ms. Stewart asked what “non-private” on Page 33 refers to. Marty Feldman stated it would be realtor versus private sale. Mr. Guevin recommended adding a footnote that states “Based on MLS Data” and remove the word non-private. On Page 28, Ms. Stewart stated there was a question about utility gas. Mr. Guevin advised this is census data and that is what it is termed. It was recommended to replace the word “Homes” with the word “Percent” in the 5th column of the chart on Page 28. On Page 37, Doug Bailey stated there is mention of the ice skating rink at Estabrook Field and advised that the ice skating rink is going to be moved to the property that had recently been deeded to the Town at the end of the Wheeler Road. Jeff Guevin recommended changing the wording to reflect that there will be an ice skating rink, but removing the location.

New Business:

. Begin Brandon-Based Code Review

Jeff Guevin had provided the Planning Commission members information from Brandy Saxton of PlaceSense. It was noted there is still a lot of work to be done on this project. Mr. Guevin stated much of the current Brandon Land Use Ordinance (BLUO) is boiler plate. The high impact uses will likely go away. In Section 204, if a building is less than 50,000 square feet, the Zoning Administrator will decide if it is high impact and if it is more than 50,000 square feet it will be a high impact use. If it is high impact, it will go to Act 250, as it will likely be more than an acre. Mr. Guevin would like to see this changed to a chart that provides information on the specified number of zoning districts and permitted uses outlined. The uses should be reviewed and a decision made on what to include in the Brandon-Based Code. Mr. Guevin stated it comes down to basically a Single-Family Residential, Multi-Family Residential, Commercial and Industrial. Mr. Guevin encouraged the Planning Commission members to review the current BLUO uses, up to Page 25, prior to the next meeting for a follow-on discussion and noted the process will likely be a similar to what was done for the Town Plan review.

. Other Business as Needed

There was no other business discussed.

Next Meeting:

November 16, 2015 @ 7:00PM at the Brandon Library

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Linda Stewart and seconded by Marty Feldman to adjourn the meeting at 8:09PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary