

Brandon Planning Commission Meeting
August 29, 2016

Board Members Present: Maria Ammatuna, Phyllis Aitchison, Mike Lufkin

Board Members Absent:

Also in Attendance: Anna Scheck – Zoning Administrator, Dave Atherton – Town Manager

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03PM by Dave Atherton – Town Manager.

2. Agenda Approval

A motion was made by Phyllis Aitchison and seconded by Maria Ammatuna to approve the agenda as amended. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Additions to Item 4. New Business:

- b. Review signage questions/continue BLUO (Brandon Land Use Ordinance) updates
- c. “Draft” minutes on Town Website
- d. Unofficial blog
- e. Zoning violations
- f. Norris Brothers solar development application
- g. Town Plan

2. Election of Planning Commission Chair

A motion was made by Phyllis Aitchison and seconded by Mike Lufkin to elect Maria Ammatuna as the Planning Commission Chair. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Dave Atherton reported the Planning Commission is down two members with the departure of Jeff Guevin and Marty Feldman. Mr. Atherton suggested the Planning Commission members encourage individuals interested in serving on the Planning Committee to contact either the Town Manager, the Select Board Chair or the Planning Commission Chair. Mr. Atherton will also place advertisements for the positions. Mr. Feldman will provide an official letter of resignation.

3. Consent Agenda

a. Planning Commission Minutes – June 6, 2016

Due to the absence of Planning Commission members who attended the June 6, 2016 meeting, Maria Ammatuna will research the protocol for approval of those minutes.

A motion was made by Phyllis Aitchison and seconded by Mike Lufkin to table approval of the Planning Commission June 6, 2016 minutes to a subsequent meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

4. New Business

a. Other Business as needed

Maria Ammatuna stated it appears that the Planning Commission has been working on a Brandon Based Code that has been prepared from a vanilla version of Form Based Code. Phyllis Aitchison stated the Brandon Based Code does not have a completed draft and is not currently in use. Ms. Ammatuna will follow-up with Jeff Guevin regarding this work. Ms. Ammatuna stated that any work relating to significant changes regarding development should have a time line established.

Ms. Ammatuna suggested since the Planning Commission is a sub-committee of the Select Board that a Planning Commission report should be included in the Select Board packet. Dave Atherton agreed it would be good practice to advise the Select Board of the Planning Commission's work and suggested that an update could be provided to the Town Manager to be included in his report to the Select Board. Ms. Ammatuna also suggested the Zoning Administrator submit a report to the Planning Commission by the Friday before the Planning Commission's meetings.

Ms. Ammatuna also suggested the Planning Commission re-establish the responsibility of capital budgeting. Ms. Ammatuna would like the Planning Commission to work with the Select Board through the budget process for the first year. Dave Atherton suggested Ms. Ammatuna reach out to Susan Schreiber at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission for assistance in getting the process in order.

b. Review Signage Questions/Continue BLUO Updates

Maria Ammatuna suggested keeping Item b relating to signage questions and BLUO updates as an agenda item for subsequent meetings until these topics are completed. Ms. Ammatuna will be submitting the Planning Commission agenda to the Town Office for posting.

c. "Draft" minutes on Town Website

Maria Ammatuna stated that she has reviewed the Planning Commission minutes over the last year that are posted on the website. She noted that there are minutes that indicate "draft" and stated the minutes should be completed as final versions. It was noted that all minutes with exception of the June 2016 minutes have been approved and are completed minutes. Dave Atherton will request the Town Office staff revise the posted minutes to reflect that they are approved. Ms. Ammatuna will request Jeff Guevin provide her information on all work in progress. Ms. Ammatuna suggested the current Planning Commission members review the prior meeting minutes.

d. Unofficial blog

Maria Ammatuna advised there is a Planning Commission Blog on the Town's website that was last updated in 2015. Ms. Ammatuna suggested the current Planning Commission members review the blog. Ms. Ammatuna will also clarify this item with Jeff Guevin as to whether any correspondence that comes into the blog goes directly to Mr. Guevin.

e. Zoning violations

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Maria Ammatuna stated this has been a continuous topic in previous Planning Commission minutes and will remain on the agenda for future meetings.

f. Norris Brothers solar development application

Dave Atherton advised that the Town has received information from the Public Service Board (PSB) concerning an application for Norris Brothers Solar development. Mr. Atherton stated the Town can submit paperwork to the PSB for interested party status. Mr. Atherton noted this is a reapplication of the project that had received “Dismissal Without Prejudice” from the PSB due to Green Mountain Power having met their statutory cap for net-metering applications. Mr. Atherton reported the Town has screening requirements in the Town Plan for solar projects. Anna Scheck noted the PSB reviews town plans when an application is submitted. Maria Ammatuna suggested a letter be sent to the PSB referencing the Town Plan. Ms. Scheck stated when the BLUO is rewritten, the changes made in the Town Plan should also be incorporated. Mr. Atherton provided a copy of the letter previously sent requesting interested party status for the project and advised the letter will be updated and resent to the PSB for this application. The new application was submitted 8/15/16 and the Town has 30 days to submit the request.

g. Town Plan

Phyllis Aitchison advised that Mr. Guevin reviewed drafts with the Select Board in the past. Anna Scheck stated there is a process that is required when the Town Plan has to be redone. Dave Atherton suggested the Planning Commission review the Town Plan and make updates to the sections that require changes so that when it is up for renewal, it would be an easier process. Currently, in order to renew the downtown designation, the maps relating to this section of town need to be updated. Mr. Atherton stated the Town Plan is an important document and affects future grants. Mr. Atherton advised a map denoting Brandon’s Designated Downtown has to be included in the Town Plan and the Town has until October 15th to send a renewed application for downtown designation status and the proposed changes to the Town Plan have to be approved by both the Planning Commission and the Select Board. Anna Scheck advised that the Planning Commission is required to have one hearing and the Select Board is required to have two hearings regarding the Town Plan approval. In addition, thirty days prior to the first hearing, a cover letter and documentation has to be mailed to the Executive Director of the Regional Planning Commission, the Department of Housing and Community Affairs and the abutting towns Planning Commission chairs regarding the changes to be made. The hearing notice must be posted 15 days prior to the first hearing and the document must be submitted to the Select Board not less than 30 days or no more than 120 days from the Planning Commission’s hearing. In reviewing the map provided to the Town by Rutland Regional Planning Commission, it was noted there are several errors in the map. Mr. Atherton advised that he will contact the Regional Planning Commission to request a correction to the map. Mr. Atherton will also request an extension for the designated downtown application. Mr. Atherton stressed the importance of the Town Plan. Maria Ammatuna questioned what group is responsible for the designated downtown and Mr. Atherton advised that it is run by the Main Street Group, who work in unison with the Brandon Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Atherton suggested the Planning Commission invite a member of the Main Street Group to a future Planning Commission meeting for a discussion.

5. Old Business

a. Zoning Administrator Report

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Anna Scheck provided the Planning Commission a permit report. Ms. Scheck advised that she usually provides the Planning Commission copies of the permits that are issued. Dave Atherton stated the Zoning Administrator reports to the Select Board and the permit data is for the Planning Commission's information. Maria Ammatuna requested a list of the current violations for future reference in determining whether there should be changes to the BLUO. Ms. Scheck reported there are currently no formal notice of violations. Ms. Ammatuna suggested the Planning Commission work with the Town Manager and Select Board with regard to the BLUO. Mr. Atherton stated there are deficiencies in the BLUO that require amendments, however, the Town is in a catch-up process and they are taking one thing at a time. He noted the BLUO needs to be updated as it is too old and it is not working anymore. The Town has changed and there is a lot going on and things need to be looked at. Ms. Scheck stated in going through the current ordinance, there are inconsistencies and she suggested doing a review by section.

6. Date for Next Meeting

September 19, 2016 – Brandon Town Hall @ 7:00PM

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Phyllis Aitchison and seconded by Mike Lufkin to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:20PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary