

DRAFT
Brandon Planning Commission Meeting
August 7, 2017

Board Members Present: Stephanie Jerome, Lisa Rovi, Bill Mills

Board Members Absent: Ethan Nelson

Also in Attendance: Anna Scheck – Zoning Administrator, Liz Murray

1. Call to order

Stephanie Jerome called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

2. Agenda Approval

A motion was made by Bill Mills to approve the agenda as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Consent Agenda

a. Approve Planning Commission Minutes – June 19, 2017

A motion was made by Bill Mills to approve the Planning Commission minutes of June 19, 2017. **The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Zoning Administrator's Report

Anna Scheck reported there were 9 permit applications received, with 8 permits issued and one pending additional information. Two property owners on Newton Road received letters prior to the flood addressing the junk issues and those property owners are working on these issues. There have been no permits received relating to flood damage. The Zoning Administrator had sent a letter to all residents on Newton Road and noted that the Select Board has waived the permit fees for applications relating to flood damage. The Mendon sign ordinance had been reviewed as a reference for changes to Brandon's sign ordinance and the Zoning Administrator provided comments to the Planning Committee Chair. Stephanie Jerome noted that Ed Bove of the Regional Planning Commission had suggested the Mendon sign ordinance was a good example, however, Mendon has quite different frontage and the signage requirements are much different from a small downtown. Ms. Scheck reported there was a DRB decision regarding the Thompson appeal and the DRB upheld the Zoning Administrator's decision. With regard to the mural for the Artist Guild, Ms. Scheck reported it has been proposed that the mural would be placed on a film that would adhere to the building. The Artist Guild does not want to paint the mural directly on the building and it was thought that the film would be more acceptable as it does adhere to the bricks. Ms. Scheck noted Mr. Kessler of the Agency of Commerce & Community Development provided the criteria required under 10VSA 494(13). Mr. Kessler stated if it does not follow 10VSA 494(13), it should be considered a sign. Bill Mills stated that with art, there is usually something placed between the artwork and the building. It was noted this is still going on the bricks and does adhere to the building. It was questioned if it has to go before the Select Board again. Ms. Scheck advised if it meets the criteria of 10VSA 494(13),

permission would not be required. Stephanie Jerome suggested the Planning Commission provide a document of support to the Select Board indicating that it meets the criteria. Ms. Scheck will speak with Jeff Stewart regarding the mural and determine if the Artist Guild would like a letter of support from the Planning Commission. Ms. Scheck provided information regarding agriculture that she obtained from the Town of Middlebury.

5. Discussion of Sign Changes – BLUO 2017

Anna Scheck provided the Planning Commission members a copy of all the historical sign ordinances. It was noted that the Town Manager and Economic Development Director have suggested a more simplistic method for signage for businesses. It was noted the 1999 and 2006 versions of the sign ordinance were much simpler methods. It was also noted that Mendon has similar criteria to the 2006 version. It was suggested to come up with a formula based on building façade. Bill Mills questioned if prior issues with signs were due to size or lighting. Ms. Scheck noted there have been issues with lighted signs and there can be a limit as to how bright lit signs are. It was suggested that existing signs be allowed to be reused without requiring a permit. In the current ordinance, any time there is a change in the business, a permit is required. It was suggested that if a sign has been approved in recent years, it would not be required to have a permit for a change in the sign, if it is the exact size. Any new sign would require a permit. Ms. Scheck stated the change in business might fall under a change of use, which would require a permit. Ms. Scheck suggested signs should not be listed under accessory structures, due to the restricted criteria and should be separate. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to review the 2006 version of the sign ordinance and provide suggested changes for discussion at the next meeting.

6. Discussion of Agricultural Changes – Act 68

Stephanie Jerome provided the Planning Commission members information about an agriculture issue in Rutland. She noted one can have chickens in Rutland City, but there is an ordinance regarding noise and cleanliness. Anna Scheck stated there could be a nuisance ordinance included for noise. Ms. Scheck advised the State is now only going to regulate small farms; therefore, the Town will have to include regulations in its ordinance for other types of circumstances. Ms. Scheck noted there have not been many issues regarding agriculture. Lisa Rovi could not find anything in other ordinances indicating people could not have chickens on their property and suggested there could be an ordinance with regard to odor and cleanliness. Ms. Rovi reviewed the current ordinance criteria that included restrictions about property line, surface waters and minimizing odors and it was suggested a statement regarding noise be added to the ordinance. The following statement will be added to the Farm Animals section: No farm animals should be kept within such a place or manner as to be offensive or cause a nuisance to persons residing in the vicinity. It was also suggested to remove the criteria regarding the amount of acreage required and to maintain the verbiage with regard to manure, and the Committee agreed.

7. Old/New Business

Stephanie Jerome reported the Rutland Regional Planning Commission would be reviewing and discussing Brandon's Town Plan during their September 19th meeting. The RRPC will be assisting the Town in updating the Energy section of the Town Plan to assure that it is in compliance with the Regional Plan.

It was noted that Liz Murray should submit a letter of interest in serving on the Planning Commission to the Select Board. Bill Mills should also submit a letter of interest to the Select Board concerning continuation in serving on the Committee, as his term expired in June.

Ms. Jerome reiterated the Planning Commission members should review the 2006 sign ordinance and bring suggested changes to the next meeting. Anna Scheck to distribute a copy of the 2006 ordinance to all Planning Commission members.

8. Date for Next Meeting

September 5, 2017 @ 6:00PM – Tuesday – Brandon Town Hall – Special Planning Commission Meeting

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Bill Mills to adjourn the meeting at 7:20PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary