

**Brandon Planning Commission Meeting
February 3, 2020**

Board Members Present: Ethan Nelson, Michael Shank, Stephanie Jerome

Board Members Absent: Lowell Rasmussen, Bill Mills

Others Present: Jeff Biasuzzi

1. Call to order

Michael Shank, Interim Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:21PM.

2. Agenda Approval

A motion was made by Ethan Nelson to approve the agenda. **The motion passed.**

3. Consent Agenda

a. Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2020

A motion was made by Ethan Nelson to approve the Planning Commission minutes of January 6, 2020 as presented. **The motion passed.**

4. Zoning Administrator Report

Jeff Biasuzzi reported there were four permits submitted last month. The CRT Group is Blue Seal Feeds on Route 7 who are requesting an addition to add a small warehouse to their existing store. There is a request for a home occupation on Wheeler Road for a gun shop that is opening, with the business being mainly internet-type sales. Another permit is an appeal of a Zoning Administrator denial to the DRB regarding a setback waiver request. Mr. Biasuzzi noted that Brandon has a farm animal regulation and the Town has zoning regulations against farm animals in the aquifer. There is a request for a conditional use permit for an individual on Church Street that has pet chickens and ducks.

5. River Corridors Update

Jeff Biasuzzi received an email from Ed Bove of the RRPC concerning river corridors however, the Town has not received the process for adopting River Corridor language in the BLUO. Michael Shank will talk with the Town Manager about this subject.

Mr. Biasuzzi questioned if there is intent to make any additional changes to the BLUO, such as the Accessory Structures section. Mr. Biasuzzi noted Brandon has many deep lots that are vacant in the back and these empty lots could provide in-fill housing. He also noted there are many large houses that could be changed into multi-family houses. Michael Shank suggested the Planning Commission potentially address affordable housing going forward. Stephanie Jerome stated there is affordable homes to purchase, but the rental market is not affordable. Mr. Shank suggested some topics the Planning Commission could address in the future could be in-fill development, affordable housing and maintaining housing. Ms. Jerome advised there was a report completed by an outside firm after Irene that could provide good information on this subject. Ms. Jerome noted concern with taking single-family homes and chopping them into multi-family housing. Mr. Shank stated it would be worth consideration to allow people to build small rentals in the deep lots. Mr. Biasuzzi will share a report with the Planning Commission on a national study that was done on this subject. Mr. Biasuzzi stated many families are adding housing for the elderly and also noted the average size of new homes is decreasing.

Michael Shank noted over the last month the Energy Plan was approved and inserted into the Town Plan and Ed Bove of the RRPC has inserted the new River Corridor language into the BLUO. Mr. Shank suggested moving to the hearing process for the River Corridor information, mindful that there are more revisions to be made to the BLUO. Mr. Biasuzzi suggested sending the draft document to the RRPC for review and noted that most towns also have the documents reviewed for legality. Mr. Biasuzzi noted the VLCT could do a review for illegal language and enforceable language and advised they charge \$90/hour, or the document could be vetted by the Town's attorney. Mr. Biasuzzi stated the VLCT provides towns a certain amount of time as members, but for an in-depth document review, it would be a chargeable service. Mr. Shank will ask the RRPC if there are legal reviews completed in their office. Mr. Shank stated Mr. Bove questioned when the BLUO was last updated. Mr. Biasuzzi will advise the RRPC that the last update was completed on August 27, 2018.

6. Old/New Business

Ethan Nelson advised there should be a correction in the Notice of Meetings, as Dave's Store is now Forestdale Grocery & Deli.

Michael Shank has advised the Energy Committee about the upcoming vacancy on the Planning Commission to determine if anyone is interested in serving on the Planning Commission.

Stephanie Jerome advised there are also sections that could be revised in the Town Plan. Michael Shank stated once the River Corridors section of the BLUO is completed, a review of the Town Plan could be done. Mr. Shank noted the next step would be to review the Accessory Structure section and do a full copy edit of the BLUO. Jeff Biasuzzi advised when revising a town plan, one must go through the hearing and approval process. It would require writing a report itemizing the changes to be made and sending a copy of the draft plan and report to the abutting towns' Planning Commissions, the Regional Planning Commission and the State departments that are required by statute.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Next meeting – March 16, 2020 at 6:00PM at the Town Office.

9. Adjournment

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:07PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary