

**Brandon Planning Commission Meeting - Draft  
June 1, 2020**

**Board Members Present:** Michael Shank, Stephanie Jerome, Lowell Rasmussen, Ralph Ethier, Allie Walter, Allie Breyer, Bill Mills

**Others Present:** Seth Hopkins, Jeff Biasuzzi

**1. Call to order**

Michael Shank, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01PM.

**2. Agenda Approval**

A motion was made by Stephanie Jerome to approve the agenda. **The motion passed.**

**3. Approve Meeting Minutes – May 4, 2020**

A motion was made by Lowell Rasmussen to approve the Planning Commission minutes of May 4, 2020 as presented. **The motion passed.**

**6. River Corridors Update**

Michael Shank stated the Select Board had recommended waiting to see if there was the possibility of holding in-person hearings for the River Corridors update to the BLUO. The Planning Commission has held their public hearing and the next step was for the Select Board to host two public hearings. Seth Hopkins stated that the Select Board has decided to move forward with the notification process and hold the first Select Board hearing on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Hopkins stated there was discussion of whether to go back to in-person meetings, and it is not thought to be a good idea, so it will be done virtually. Michael Shank will provide a PowerPoint presentation at the meeting and indicated they would be able to use the screen share on Zoom to present the sides. This will be followed by questions or comments from the public and Select Board. Mr. Shank encouraged the Committee members to attend the meeting that is scheduled for 6:30PM on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. If anyone wants to add to the presentation, Mr. Shank would welcome suggestions.

**7. Old/New Business**

Stephanie Jerome reported her days have been fully involved in helping Vermonters get their unemployment benefits. The next phase of the stimulus money is \$400 million, and the second phase will affect the town planning with a community development grant for towns. It is not huge amounts but could be something for projects like Greenways or other projects that are going on in town. This is an innovative way to raise money for community projects that will be beneficial to the entire community. We should know about the Federal Cares Act by the end of June.

Michael Shank reported from this evening's Energy Committee meeting the EV Festival has been postponed to July 2021, given that many events in towns have been cancelled. The Committee will schedule virtual workshops when they can. The McKernon Group hosted a workshop on heat pumps and the Energy Committee is in conversation with Tim Fisher to host a virtual workshop when his showroom is up and running. Any virtual workshop suggestions for the Energy Committee to host would be welcome.

Michael Shank noted in an effort to be transparent, Allie Breyer and he are dating and anything that poses a conflict of interest, they will flag that item.

Michael Shank stated the Planning Commission's major focus for June and July will be the River Corridors plan.

Lowell Rasmussen asked if there will be a meeting invite on Zoom for the River Corridors public hearing. Michael Shank stated the Select Board notification on the website will have the Zoom information. Seth Hopkins stated it will be posted on the Town's website and anyone that gets a notification for the Select Board meetings would receive the notification. There will also be notifications sent by Dave Atherton for those who are impacted by the River Corridors.

Michael Shank stated at the last in-person meeting, Jeff Biasuzzi and Devon Fuller requested the Planning Commission facilitate a conversation about parking in Town. Mr. Shank sent an email to key groups in Town to move the conversation forward. It is recommended to now wait until the meetings are back in person because there was not consensus that there is a problem to be solved. Once the parking lots open up and are available it can be determined if there are any bottle necks due to the new parking, post construction. Stephanie Jerome agreed as there will be more parking in town when the new parking lot is finished, and the Committee should wait and see if there is a problem. Jeff Biasuzzi reported he spoke with a representative for Tennybrook and was advised the timeline for the gas station will not be until October, which would possibly push the parking lot project out. The Town may want to proceed as the projects are not tied together by the Tennybrook permit. Seth Hopkins reported the Town was awarded a grant for the parking lot and were trying to coordinate with the Tennybrook people. The Town Manager may want to implement the start of the parking lot in light of the new information. Michael Shank stated the parking lot conversation will not be fast tracked until there is a sense of how business is working with the new parking lot.

Stephanie Jerome suggested the Planning Commission next focus on a full edit of the BLUO for language and inconsistencies once the River Corridors are approved. Jeff Biasuzzi was in support of this rewrite and noted Brandon is not the first town that he has gone through a rewrite of the zoning ordinance with the Planning Commission. He suggested doing the definitions first. Mr. Biasuzzi had drafted some definitions that are ready for review and critique by the Planning Commission. Mr. Biasuzzi noted the RRPC will review ordinance changes at no charge for legality and language correction. The VLCT will also provide more language recommendations for a fee. They can look at a document and give an estimate of costs. Mr. Biasuzzi stated if the Planning Commission has a budget this might be a window of opportunity to send the definitions to the VLCT for review. Michael Shank questioned if the definitions could be placed in a Google Doc for all Commission members to vet and edit them and then send the entire document to the RRPC for review. Once the document is complete, a hearing could be scheduled on the totality of the amendments. Mr. Biasuzzi suggested he could go through the wish list of suggestions for the entire document, like the definitions and send it in highlighted form to the Planning Commission members. Seth Hopkins stated going through the Zoning Administrator is a good way to comply with the Open Meeting Law as doing any kind of "reply all" is a violation of the Law. Mr. Shank liked the initial idea of a wish list and he would be interested in obtaining confirmation from VLCT whether editing a Google Doc would be acceptable, since the group is not meeting or in conversation together and the editing process is not a group effort. Mr. Biasuzzi will contact VLCT tomorrow to confirm. Stephanie Jerome suggested Mr. Biasuzzi provide the draft document prior to the next meeting, if possible. Mr. Biasuzzi will send the list of definitions which are a compilation of definitions from other towns that might be useful. Mr. Biasuzzi noted Brandon does not use a Table of Uses and the structure is completely different but having good definitions would make for good zoning. He stated the document for laymen is a little hard to interpret, but it was well thought out. There are areas that need improvement and some items are outdated.

## **5. Zoning Administrator Report**

Jeff Biasuzzi reported permits have increased with the start of construction. The high school has received its permit to change the vestibule and canopy and a new sign. With regard to the River Corridors hearing that is scheduled for 6:30PM on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, it was thought that the Select Board is required to hold only one hearing unless there are substantial changes to the document. Mr. Biasuzzi stated if a town has a population over 2500, it would be required to hold two hearings. Mr. Hopkins stated at least the first one is scheduled for June 22<sup>nd</sup> and the Select Board did not plan to make any substantial changes. Mr. Hopkins stated this will be taken under advisement and the Select Board may hold a second hearing not on a Select Board meeting night. The Select Board is not looking to delay the process and were trying to do an in-person meeting, but if two hearings are required, they will comply.

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

Next meeting – July 20, 2020 at 6:00PM via Zoom Meeting.

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## **9. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Stephanie Jerome to adjourn the meeting at 6:50PM. **The motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant  
Recording Secretary