Windham Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Feb. 12, 2020

Meeting called to order at 6:30.

Present:

Bill Dunkel

Jeff Wheeler

Tom Johnson

Vance Bell

Chris Cummings

Dawn Bower

Kate Wright (meeting minutes)

The minutes from our meeting on January 8, 2020 were approved – motion by Chris to accept, seconded by Vance, all approved.

Bill announced that the WRC Executive Committee has approved Windham’s Town Plan and enhanced energy plan. We have been awarded substantial deference in future Public Utility Commission hearings. A champagne toast would have ensued had there been any champagne.

Bill mentioned that John Bennett, of the WRC, expressed concern that the PC had suggested several minor grammatical and rhetorical changes to the Town Plan after the WRC public hearing. Although none of these changes are substantive in nature and they are intended only to clarify the intent of the plan, he felt that any change that is adopted without strictly following proper procedures could leave the town in a vulnerable position if someone challenged the validity of the plan. Acting on John’s advice, Bill is checking with an attorney.

Vance reminded us that four members of the Planning Commission (Chris, Jeff, Kate and Bill) are up for reappointment this year. Each person should let the Select Board know if they are interested in continuing to serve. Bill also will mention this to Maureen Bell.

Bill presented a draft of his summary of key points in the zoning regulations. We discussed whether to include a map on the back of the page showing the zoning districts. Tom suggested that perhaps the map should include parcel boundaries so that landowners easily can see which district their property is in. Vance suggested that Jeff Nugent, of the WRC, might be able to produce a map that would also show the high elevation resource protection overlay district.

Other points made in discussing the draft summary included:

* Consider including wording about wind or solar being allowed as a conditional use in most districts.
* Should the document include a link to a map residents could access to determine whether their properties are in a flood plain? Vance suggested that FEMA would have such maps.
* Chris suggested that we should be more specific about the size of wind and solar systems that are acceptable; i.e. specify this in kilowatts.
* Consider developing a separate document that lists the kind of construction projects that need a zoning permit and those which do not.
* Vance suggested putting the zoning summary and all related documents on the town website and having some paper copies available at the town office.

Bill will present information at Town Meeting about the Window Dressers program, which produces inexpensive storm windows. He will bring a sample window toTown Meeting.

Bill will write an article for the *News and Notes* which will include an update on the Town Plan and the energy plan, and also will outline the Window Dresses program.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be on March 11 at 6:30PM in the town office. The main agenda item will be to decide on the final layout for zoning regs summary.

Motion to adjourn – by Chris, seconded by Dawn. All agreed

Meeting adjourned at 7:43.