

**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
November 4, 2014**

Items on the Agenda

A. Call to Order: Lori Donna called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

B. Roll Call: Henry Bonges, Lori Donna, Tony Micklus and Jay Mitiguy.

Staff Present: Katherine Sonnicks, Planning Director.

Public Present: None

C. Additions to/Deletions from the Agenda: None.

D. Public Forum: None

E. Approval of October 14, 2014 Minutes: The Planning Commission (PC) discussed some changes to the October 14, 2014 minutes and agreed to have Katherine make the changes, but they would vote on the minutes at their next meeting.

F. Zoning Regulations: “What’s Next” Discussion/Brainstorm: Lori opened the discussion item. She noted that she has been speaking with different Selectboard (SLB) members and Brian, the Town Manager, about moving some items ahead quickly, even before Town Meeting. She also wanted to make sure to disclose to everyone that she and Bob Brisson are seeing each other and she has no financial standing in Bob’s properties. She also spoke with Brian and Darren about this. The PC appreciated that she shared this with them.

Lori suggested that everyone could share their top three items that they would like to move forward next. Lori started by sharing her top item, which is a “working map”. This would at least get the transportation infrastructure that was desired into the Zoning Regulations. Her second priority is to think through how to have a commercial district. Maybe by choosing some downtown district, such as the M4. Everyone saw the need to think more or focus more on how to attract commercial businesses. Her third item was the “shall” instead of “should” in the Zoning Regulations. Henry noted that he would have more information on that for the next meeting. Tony noted that it might be good to relook at the chicken ordinance. Tony thought that focusing on how make the regulation more centered on commercial development would make sense. The PC talked some about quality incubator space. Henry said that Brian had noted that there was some in Catamount Industrial park. Katherine will check with Brian on that. They all agreed that it would be an asset to the downtown, even if there was some already in Catamount. Henry showed the “businesses to attract” document that he and Amy had created for the Improvement Committee Report. Katherine will send that report to everyone electronically. They also thought that maybe it would be good to pick the brain of a commercial real estate agent. Lori suggested that maybe Esther Lotz would be willing to talk with the PC or if a day would work better, maybe with Katherine and Lori. Tony’s third item was the “working” map.

Katherine thought that it might be worth looking into the official map idea again. If the SLB could be convinced of the benefit, then maybe it could pass. She noted that there were some state permitting breaks for areas with state designations. Henry noted that the designation was something to look into. The Route 7 Corridor study is going on and he had provided comments on the street trees along Route 7 and the multi-use path connectors to other roads. He also thought that looking at some aesthetic guidelines would be good, as it was a suggestion from the Improvement Committee. Tony also noted that street lights would also be something to think about. Henry is looking into LED lights and different options with the Town. He suggested something like a special district along Route 7 where some of these issues could be addressed. Katherine noted that this could be an overlay district, that would still have the underlying zoning, but the overlay could encompass properties within a certain distance from Route 7 and have specific guidelines and restrictions for those properties.

Lori noted that it might be beneficial for some members of the PC to get together to discuss these issues and begin working out some of the details. That has worked in the past.

Jay introduced himself and noted that he was new in town but also vested in the town and committed to making it a better place. The other PC members shared a little bit about themselves. Jay noted that he felt like he needs to understand more about the vision for the town. Katherine will send the pertinent documents out, such as the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and Subdivision regulations, and studies. Lori suggested sending out the Enhancing Route 7 Forum feedback.

Katherine noted that the Planning office was going to be working through the shoreland regulations and the river corridors. The state's new regulations at times do not totally match the Town's and it would be good to see what the Town can do to make review better for everyone. She also noted that she likes the overlay idea as well as general commercial and residential density and how that is calculated. She also thought that looking at how the regulations handle agriculture would be helpful.

I. Other Business: Tony noted that he learned of some new regulations on nonconforming mobile home parks. He provided a copy of the regulation and the PC will look into this to see how and if Milton complies. The PC spoke about their upcoming schedule. The Selectboard Public Hearing on the draft amendments is scheduled for November 17, 2014. The PC decided to meet after the SLB public hearing on the 17th. They will meet in the Lister's Conference Room. Henry noted that he is attending the Municipal Planning Day conference next week. Katherine noted that the town could fund any other PC member's attendance.

J. Planning Commissioners Report: Katherine noted that there will be a project in the new Capital Improvement Plan for the extension of sidewalks on Route 7 and extending down West Milton Road. She also noted that Amanda provided her with some documentation from state statute that prohibits the Town from denying a zoning permit based on a violation. This is the section on which that the town attorney also had some concerns. She provided a copy of how Essex zoning handles the issue through their Site Plan review process. The application must provide a certification that there are no outstanding violations with respect to the property, or a detailed, written description of any and all outstanding violations. The PC

agreed to pass this change along to the SLB.

K. Adjournment: Henry Bonges moved and Tony Micklus seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 PM. There was no discussion. **MOTION PASSED 4-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Katherine Sonnick, Planning Director



Lori Donna, Chair

December 2, 2014
Date