



APPROVED MEETING MINUTES - SEPTEMBER 3, 2024
TOWN OF GREENSBORO PLANNING COMMISSION
Greensboro Free Library and via zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kent Hansen, Christine Armstrong, Janet Patterson, Alexis Mattos

ABSENT MEMBERS: Brett Stanciu (ZA, ex-officio member), Kelli Story

OTHERS: Liz Steel, Beth Meacham, Meghan Meacham, Isa Oehry, Jennie Bayles, Kristen Leahy

1. CALL TO ORDER: 4:05 PM

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF (3) July and August 2024 MEETINGS' MINUTES:

- a. 7.15.24: Kent made a motion to approve minutes as written. Approved by all.
- b. 8.6.24: Christine noted edits as suggested by Janet. Kent noted one edit. Kent made a motion to approve minutes as amended. Approved by all.
- c. 8.20.24: Kent made one language change. Kent made a motion to approve minutes with one language change as discussed. Approved by all.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS, IF ANY:

Beth Meacham noted concern about the sluggish SB response to proposed bylaw amendments and that there was a new SB request for a change made in a SB meeting held after the Public Hearing which would not be the proper order of operations.

Kent replied that MacNeil brought up one new issue in the Miscellaneous Bylaw Amendment proposal—an item that has been in the bylaws for a decade or more and was not part of this bylaw review. The GPC studied it; saw that it could be tightened up but since it was a change from the bylaw that was presented at both the Misc. GPC and SB Public Hearings, it would require a NEW public hearing. The SB could wait to approve this change at the future SPD proposed bylaw Public Hearing or have a second Miscellaneous Public Hearing. This matter will be decided at the 10/5/24 SB meeting.

4. BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

A. Community Survey – Alexis noted 87 online replies to the survey. Kent has 13 paper copies to be added. Discussion about posting/publishing notices in FPF and the Hardwick Gazette to generate more responses. Discussion about making it easier for someone to access the online survey from the Town's website via the GPC webpage which Alexis will do.

B. New Flood Bylaws – Comments on the new Model Flood Bylaw provided by Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator. Discussion about the requirement to update the Flood Bylaws in order to participate in the NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program) which allows towns to have access to funds to replace flood damaged culverts and roads and to allow homeowners to access their own flood insurance despite residing in a flood zone.

Kristen noted the task is to take the Stand Alone Model Bylaw offered by VLCT for floodplains and insert it into our existing flood bylaws which date from before 2010, possibly as long ago as 2002, including



many definitions. Adoption of the river corridors in the flood bylaws was not done in the last review, more than 10 years ago. All of the Bend and the Village are in river corridor flood zones. Kristen notes that the State has passed a statute that requires them to take over the river corridor portion of managing flood bylaw at some time in the near future and thus will bypass local control.

Adoption of up-to-date and up-to-code floodplain rules will require local permitting for all interior renovations above a certain cost level for all properties in the floodplain.

Kristen noted that the adoption of new bylaws will be onerous and time consuming with approvals required not just by local GPC and SB public hearings but also by Vermont's floodplain managers and by FEMA.

She clarified that all properties that accept FEMA funding after a first flooding are required to hold flood insurance in perpetuity. Disclosure of and meeting this requirement has been a challenge to some homeowners.

Noted Table 2.8 and 5.3 of the proposed Hardwick bylaws are the relevant portions for considering flood bylaws and Greensboro can reference these. Flood zoning bylaws will be an overlay to existing bylaws because they apply to all town districts.

Kristen's suggestions for the GPC:

- Footbridges, culverts, bridges channel management should be Permitted, not Conditional Use.
- Prohibit new structures being built in a floodway. (A floodway is the channel and adjacent land that must be free of development to avoid increasing flood levels.)
- Greensboro must amend zoning to eliminate existing floodway structures over time
- Prohibit storage facilities, cemeteries
- Prohibit fill in floodway unless it's to raise a primary structure or to enable primary access (ie driveway)
- All interior improvements are considered to be non substantial improvements unless substantially improved (substantially improved: investing more than 50% of the market value in home improvements)
- Recommends that we move to require elevation for new and substantially improved construction be located at least 2 feet above base flood elevation (design flood elevation) in all districts because now flooding is happening well above base flood elevation
- Confirms that no modification of the Model Bylaw will be acceptable to FEMA or to the State Floodplain Manager
- Advises that we wait on river corridor amendments.
- Sacha Pealer, CFM is the Northeast Region's floodplain manager for Greensboro (802.490.6162; sacha.pealer@vermont.gov)

Discussion: GPC expects a digitized map, followed by a working draft of FEMA maps, then the final maps.

C. Misc Bylaw Update: (as above)



D. (out of order) Shoreland Protection Bylaw – Discussion of DRB and Select Board comments:

We have begun the spreadsheet and will have a working meeting to complete it and deliver it to the SB.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Housing Sub-committee Update: Kent expects a launch meeting for folks who signed up for Thursday, September 12, 6 PM.

B. VCRD Community Leadership 2024 Update: Discussion about the VCRD meeting that Liz and Beth attended. Collaboration of personnel and equipment between small towns should be a goal where it makes efficient sense. Training for municipal positions via VLCT is available. Small towns are dealing with big challenges.

C. New Town Plan – Format and Table of Contents Review: Discussion of priorities; deliver a snapshot of the town with supporting information in an appendix; should be a good reference document for the future; note that Greensboro is a small town and cannot be all things to all people; how to preserve what is attractive and inviting without becoming obscured by other mandates. Write a document that is less aspirational and that displays community sentiment for the future. Uncover and present overarching community principles through community forums.

6. OTHER BUSINESS AND ADJOURNMENT: Discussed scheduling a brief work meeting for 9.16.24 @ 10 AM. Kent made a motion to adjourn. Accepted. Adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Next regular PC meeting will be on October 1, 2024.

C. Armstrong,
Clerk