



APPROVED PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES - MARCH 10, 2026
TOWN OF GREENSBORO PLANNING COMMISSION
GFL and Via Zoom

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Ned Swanberg, (Vermont ANR/DEC Rivers Program), Janet Long, Karl Stein, Judy Carpenter, Bob Youngman, Davis Barnet, Stew Arnold, Brett Stanciu, Nick ____, Lise Armstrong, Rick Lovett, Paul Flint

CALL TO ORDER: (6:37)

Kent noted that this was a Public Hearing to discuss and allow for public comment on proposed amendments to the Greensboro Bylaw, Article 6 *Flood Hazard Area Regulations*. These amendments are required for the town to continue to participate in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program and to ensure that the Town qualifies for the highest level of reimbursement from the Vermont Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund by including a new section on River Corridor Protection. The vast majority of flood damages occur in river corridors. Kent noted the proposed new bylaw was a collaborative effort between the GPC, especially the work of Janet Patterson; the Northern Vermont Development Association; the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, and Kristen Leahy, the Hardwick Zoning Administrator, Flood Plain Manager, and Greensboro resident.

PRESENTATION:

Ned Swanberg presented the history and rationale for (1) the new FEMA mapping and updated regulation requirements and (2) the State's River Corridor development regulations. Ned noted that, in the current FEMA maps from 1984, there are approximately 174 structures in the SFHA with 127 by Caspian Lake. With the new updated maps based on better data and modeling, there are 31 structures in the SFHA and 16 are by Caspian Lake. The new maps will be available to the public possibly this spring, but likely later. In the new bylaw, the lowest floor elevation must be at least two feet above the base flood elevation.

Ned noted that the purpose of the River Corridor Protection is to protect the area needed by the river to naturally meander and, thus, reduce the damage from the erosive power of the river during rising peak floods; to avoid putting people in harm's way in known hazard areas; to avoid adverse impact on river corridor functions; and to avoid increasingly costly damages. Under the new bylaw, one can't build closer to the river than what's already there; "fill or grading" is allowed only if there is no net loss of flood water storage. Ned discussed the FEMA and State of Vermont reimbursement rates for flood damage repairs if the river corridor regulations are included in a town's zoning bylaws.

Janet Patterson discussed the history and rationale for the proposed amendments to Greensboro's Article 6. The current Article 6 would be replaced in full by the proposed updated Article 6, describing it as an Overlay Bylaw which is a second layer of required review for proposed development in river corridors and Special Flood Hazard Areas. If the river corridor/flood overlay bylaw is more restrictive than the underlying zoning bylaw regulations, the provisions of the most restrictive take precedence. A question was raised whether these regulations apply to an entire parcel if only a portion of the parcel is in the mapped areas or if they only apply to the mapped area. It was clarified that the regulations apply only to the portion of the property that is mapped as in the river corridor or in a SFHA. A Certificate of Occupancy is now required. New definitions have been added.

Kent noted the GPC will vote on this bylaw at the next meeting and forward it to the SB for their public hearing.

7. ADJOURNMENT: 7:37 PM

C. Armstrong, Clerk