

Bristol Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2015

Commission Members: Sue Kavanagh, Skimmer Hellier, Gary Clark, Bill Brown, Kris Perlee, Chico Martin, John Elder, Katie Raycroft-Meyer, Bill Sayer (7:44pm)

Other: Eric Forand (Zoning Admin), Mary Arbuckle (NEAT tv), Adam Lougee (ACRPC)

Public: Bob Donnis, Randy Durand, Brian Wendel, John McCormick, Sue Hawkins

Annual organizational meeting opened at 7:06pm

Chairperson asked if anyone had any updates or changes to the PC's Policies and Procedures document, last updated a year ago at the 2014 organizational meeting, no changes were proposed.

Sue gave the table to John for nominations for Chairperson. Sue was nominated for Chairperson, all were in favor (8-0).

John gave the table to Sue for nominations for Vice Chairperson. John was nominated for Vice Chairperson, all were in favor (8-0).

Chico made a motion, seconded by Skimmer to close annual meeting. All in favor (8-0).

Annual meeting closed at 7:11pm

Opened the regular Planning Commission meeting at 7:11pm

Approval of minutes:

Chico made a motion seconded by Kris to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2015 meeting as presented. All were in favor (8-0).

Brian Wendel spoke to the Commission about his property located on Heath Road. Brian has a 10 acre lot with 8 acres on the east side of Heath Road and 2 acres on the west. The entire lot is in the conservation district. Brian was suggesting to the Commission that the lots on Heath Road be re-zoned to a higher density. He would like to sub-divide his two acres but cannot because the minimum lot size in conservation is 25 acres. He stated that there are several two acres lots around his two acre lot and his lot is on the border with HDR. Sue stated that the Commission is concerned that if they change the zone for his property they would get other requests from landowners to change their single lot designations and that these requests need to be considered consistently and fairly to all land owners. Sue stated the topic of zone boundaries might be discussed further under the report from Katie's ad-hoc committee on zone boundary review. The Commission thanked Brian for his time.

Bob Donnis spoke to the Commission as the new chairperson of the Bristol Energy Commission. The Energy Commission met in January to address their 3 main goals;

- They want to be the resource for energy in Bristol, meeting with local groups etc.
- Disseminating information to the public.
- Engage the public with energy saving measures

Bob introduced likely new Energy Commission members Sue Hawkins and John McCormick. The Commission thanked Bob for his time.

Administrative Matters:

John gave an update on the three possible grant applications being written in support of possible development of the Town-owned Stoney Hill property and land now owned by Stoney Hill Properties LLC. John described the timeline of the events surrounding interest in developing these lots. The PC has been working for over a decade on a potential business/industrial park on the Town-owned property on Stoney Hill. Up until a few months ago the process was impeded by lack of access to the land owned by the Town. Two years ago the PC with support from the Select Board submitted a state Community Development Block grant (CDBG) proposal for planning of a business/industrial park at that location, but the PC later retracted that submission because they were told they would need a business partner committed to the project in order for the CDBG grant to be possibly made to Bristol. In the last few months Stoney Hill Properties LLC has purchased the land fronting West Street that will potentially give access to the Town-owned Stoney Hill property. They are working with the Town now on potentially siting a fire station there and possibly swapping that parcel for Town-owned land. Given the new business partner the PC will now resubmit its CDBG grant request, due May 1. There are two other grant possibilities from the USDA related to development and water/waste water. The town will also be applying for a grant to extend town water to Lovers Lane. John submitted a resolution to the PC that he would like to have the PC approve and send to the Select Board.

John made a motion to submit the resolution, detailed below, to the Select Board, seconded by Chico. All were in favor (9-0).

“ The Planning Commission strongly supports current efforts by the Bristol Select Board, Stoney Hill Properties LLC, the Bristol Firehouse Committee, and others in relation to planning for, seeking funding for, and developing a business park at Stoney Hill. Pursuing these goals in connection with current efforts to site and build a new firehouse and to extend municipal water to Lovers Lane is an appropriate and creative approach. These interwoven endeavors support goals 1 and 3 of the Town Plan’s section 10 economic development: to ‘attract and maintain businesses...’ and to ‘provide a favorable climate for light industry development...’ while recognizing that there are many calls on Bristol’s resources now, in our opinion no project could have a higher priority for our town.”

Chico made a motion to allow Sue to sign a letter of support for the CDBG grant on behalf of the PC, seconded by Kris. All were in favor (9-0).

The sub-committee on the Vermont State Geological Services maps of Bristol will report at the next meeting and formally share the new maps with the PC at that time (now available in the Town Offices).

The sub-committee on the definition of Light Industry will report at the next meeting.

The sub-committee on zone boundary review within the Village Planning Area gave its report. Katie and Adam met to discuss instances where the zone boundary line could be adjusted to match lot lines. Their goal was to have lots fall only in one zoning district when possible. The Commission discussed the possible zone boundary changes proposed by Katie and Adam and it was decided to not make any changes at this time. Eric was tasked with working with Kevin Behm at ACRPC to update the lot/property lines on the ACRPC maps to be based on current tax maps for the Town. ACRPC is using tax lots from 1993.

The sub-committee on reviewing the Rocky Dale area gave their report. The Commission discussed whether the RC-1 zone in that area should remain RC-1 or change to another existing or proposed zone as part of the PC's Article X deliberations. The Rocky Dale RC-1 zone, if left as is, would be the only piece of RC-1 left in the town (as other areas of RC-1 are being recommended to shift to other existing or newly developed zones). Randy Durand shared his view that the Rocky Dale area is a vital corridor for wildlife moving between Deerleap and South Mountain. He would like to see it not become any more densely populated (if zoning were to change there). Gary was tasked with finding information about animal habitat and movement patterns in that area. Adam will bring a zoning map centered on Rocky Dale to the next meeting. The Commission discussed what outside parties should look at this and decided that they will ask for comments from the public once the zoning regulations and by-laws proposed changes are complete and presented to the public.

Sue tabled the review of Article X until the next meeting. She stated she would like to see the proposed updates to the Town zoning regulations and by-laws voted on in November 2016 (after the PC completes its review, holds public hearings, presents its recommendations to the Selectboard, further hearings and then warned to the public).

Kris led a discussion about how the PC might address mobile home parks in the revised by-laws. It was decided that they would be treated as single family homes and would have to adhere to the same regulations.

Chico made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Skimmer. All were in favor (9-0)

Meeting adjourned 9:35pm