

Bethel Planning Commission
Minutes: Meeting of February 15, 2012

Attending: Andrew Delaney (Chair), Fred Dieffenbach, Peter Dohrn, Carla Hodgdon, Cecil Washburn. Absent: John Duddie. Guests: Laura Rubenis, Valdis Rubenis.

Topic	Discussion	Action
1. Call to Order		Meeting called to order at 7:03 PM.
2. Review/ Revise Agenda	Suggestion: switch items 5 & 6 to accommodate guests' interests.	So moved and carried.
3. Minutes: Meeting of 01/18/12	Motion made (Hodgdon) and 2 nd (Dohrn). In the affirmative: unanimous.	Accepted as distributed in draft on 01/19/12. [Year changed by clerk]
4. Correspondence	None via surface mail. One electronic item pertinent to item 6, revised agenda.	Hold until topic under discussion.
5. Analysis of Emergency Response	<p>Discomfort with: access to, location of, and stockpiles at Emerg. Shelter; notice(s) to evacuate; communication regarding specifics and status updates of situation; availability of Local Emerg. Response Plan [LERP]; identified 'high risk' population.</p> <p>LERP accessed through Regional Planning Commission. Plan does not appear complete or accurate. One individual responsible for way, way too much.</p> <p>Meeting with the community should happen. The ideal would be a constructive, non-personal opportunity to voice thanks, concerns, and suggestions for a stronger future. Earlier requests for a meeting were 'postponed until other communities had completed assessments'. This has now occurred. Select Board has not moved to schedule meeting. One hopes that enough time has passed since Irene to have discussion of merits/areas for improvement. Impartial facilitator would be recommended: Peter Gregory (Exec. Dir., TRORC) has offered to serve in this capacity.</p> <p>At this point, a meeting is not possible before Town Meeting. Concerns will probably be voiced there. Perhaps a community opportunity to share ideas, concerns, and recommendations would be an offshoot of and alternative to consuming time on March 6th.</p> <p>Participation of the Select Board and its commitment to take suggestions under advisement are critical.</p>	Planning Commission is willing to pursue making arrangements for a public meeting with an impartial facilitator. As 'an arm' of the Select Board, it would first need their acquiescence.

6. Review Town Plan re Land Use designations	<p>Electronic document received from the Regional Planning Commission reviewed in detail: concepts therein deemed sound and to be pursued. Acknowledged: change in Highway area would impact minimum lot size for residential or area-appropriate development.</p> <p>It is perhaps time to consider a major overhaul of land use areas (simultaneous with revision of Base Zoning Districts) to better reflect ideals for Bethel. These would include ‘grand-fathering’ existing land use that would not continue to be permitted and end accommodation of everything already in place that the original Base Zoning Districts sought.</p>	For the March meeting: each Commission member will ‘mark up’ a Town map with (a) possible ‘hamlets’ identified, (b) a reduced number of land use areas, and (c) a revised/smaller Highway area.
7. OTHER	Commission membership: still lack one member. Suggestions have been passed along previously. Laura Rubenis indicated she had notified the Select Board of her interest. No action has been taken to date.	The Commission solicits attention by the Select Board to fill the remaining vacancy.
8. Next meeting / Agenda Items		<p>MARCH 21st 2012</p> <p>7:00 PM at the Bethel Town Office.</p> <p>a. Community meeting to discuss Emergency Response? b. Hamlets/land use areas/ revised Highway area.</p>
9. Adjourn.		8:45 PM.