

BETHEL PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes: Meeting of 05/20/15

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Attending: Andrew Delaney [Chair], Fred Dieffenbach, Peter Dohrn, Carla Hodgdon, Chris Sargent [TRORC], Cecil Washburn.

1. **Call to Order:** 7:05 PM.
2. **Minutes of 04/15/15 Public Forum & Meeting:** Approved with correction of ‘typo’ in 1.h.
3. **Correspondence:** (a) Application for a Certificate of Public Good regarding ‘Dartt Hill Solar, LLC [Michael Manning/GMP] with AllEarth Renewables Inc of Williston- file; (b) Notice of an Economic Development Workshop on May 21 to discuss ‘The Impact of Our Local Food System on Education and the Economy’ - file; (c) Copy of Proposed Land Use Regulations, Randolph, pursuant to a Public Forum on May 27 at 6:30pm at the Randolph Town Hall- file; (d) Notice from the Rochester Planning Commission regarding a proposed stream restoration along the West Branch of the White River up and down stream from the CCC Camp on Route 73 – file; (e) Notice from VLCT regarding an amendment to S40 that would provide statewide setback standards for siting of solar facilities, and provide municipalities authority to adopt a bylaw or ordinance that establishes screening standards for siting of solar facilities. This may be something to incorporate in our current considerations for amendments to the Bethel Zoning Ordinance; (f) Map from TRORC defining highway paving priorities for 2015- file; (g) Three documents from AT&T regarding their proposal to modify existing telecommunications antennas and equipment on a tower located at the Bethel Town garage and managed by VT Telecommunications Authority- file.
4. **Discussion of Public Forum Comments:** The majority of attendees at the Public Forum were in favor of increased safety along waterways. A question arose regarding existing residences in floodplain: If streams ‘eat away’ and approach established buildings, do landowners have any avenues for protecting the stability of their property? [No one had a clear answer to this.] A question was raised was that- while having no problem with a 50’ setback for unmapped upland streams- were additional restrictions coming down the road regarding landowner rights? An example is in Maine, where trees along streams may no longer be cut down. [Again, no one had a definitive answer.]
5. **Preliminary Discussion of possible Zoning Ordinance Amendments:**
 - (a) By unanimous agreement, we will proceed with disallowing new development in River Corridor areas of mapped streams [Third Branch, Gilead Brook, Camp Brook, and Lilliesville Brook] and require a 50’ setback from unmapped upland streams.
 - (b) We will proceed with combining the existing Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations into one unified document.
 - (c) All definitions will be pulled from where they currently appear and be placed in one section together.
 - (d) ‘Organization’ of the Unified Bylaw will be improved and follow accepted outlining practices for easier location and referencing.
 - (e) Several townships in this region regard the current Bethel Zoning Ordinance a model for description of Land Use Categories. That being said, Randolph utilizes a number of additional use descriptions that we will consider [e.g., Contractor’s Yard; Office, high volume; and Office, low volume];
 - (f) Much of the existing Zoning Ordinance will be transferred to a Unified Bylaw with minor, if any, changes. The section on Wireless Telecommunications Facilities will be removed, as it is

now outdated. There will be a major change in Base Zoning Districts- not in overall permitted or conditional uses- but in the number of Districts and their nomenclature.

(g) Chris anticipates that draft material will be available for distribution at each meeting, for discussion at the next. A draft of two sections: 'General Provisions' and 'Application of this Bylaw' were distributed for review at in June.

6. Other: No items brought forth.

7. Next Meeting / Agenda Items: **Wednesday, JUNE 17 2015**
[7:00 Pm at the Bethel Town Office Conference Room]

Agenda Items: Review 'General Provisions' section.
Review 'Application of this Bylaw' section.
Other items as necessary.

8. Adjourn: 8:05 PM.

Distributed: 05/22/15.