

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
April 11, 2016**

Members Present: Chris Vincent, Chairman; John Medeiros, Matt Conklin, John Barnett, and Randy Major; Kathy Kingston, Vice Chair arrived at 7:06 p.m.

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager / Planning & Zoning Administrator), Karen Astley (Recording Clerk), Lisa Dotson and Nancy Dalzell

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chris Vincent called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: Item 5a should read Article V not Article IV

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: John Medeiros made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Chris Vincent seconded the motion. Motion passed.

4. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT: Chris Vincent thanked John Medeiros for the years he sat on the Planning Commission as Chairman. Kathy Kingston requested that Paul Banik be removed from the email distribution and add Susan Harlow as the Select Board Alternate. Lisa Dotson introduced herself and stated she was searching for a commission/committee to be involved with. Kathy Kingston asked Lisa Dotson if she was aware of what the Planning Commission was working on? Russ Hodgkins explained that every five years Zoning Bylaws need to be reviewed and updated based on the Town Plan and changes within the community. Kathy gave her a brief summary as the Planning Commission was working on revising the Interim 2014 Zoning Bylaws. Russ also mentioned that the 2014 "Interim" Bylaws would expire 4/22/2016 but they could be adopted one more year with Select Board approval which would be presented to the Select Board at the April 13, 2016 meeting.

Chris Vincent asked about the drafted drone ordinance that had been sent to Russ Hodgkins as this is a safety, nuisance/harassment and invasion of privacy concern. Russ stated that this could be discussed under "Other Business" as no action will be taken on the topic this evening. The Select Board is in charge of writing ordinances but the Planning Commission could recommend a draft to them. Chris Vincent to draft drone language.

Russ Hodgkins handed out the Ringelmann Smoke Chart as it is mentioned in the Bylaws. This will be added as an Appendix.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):

A): Discussion of proposed Bylaw revisions, Article V: General Regulations

Discussion (page 35) ensued about "drones" and whether or not drones should be a part of Section V; 511 Standards. The Board was not sure drones belonged here or perhaps in Article VI: Special Regulations of the Bylaws. Board agreed to table "drones" until Chris could come back with appropriate language.

6. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):

a) Act 250 Business: No New Business.

b) PSB Business: Chris Vincent presented to the Commission a re-notification from the PSB on the Vermont National Guard solar array project that is going into the Industrial Park. Russ Hodgkins explained that the first application was incorrect as the capacity didn't match the needs of the VT National Guard and there was no excess electricity going into the market. The VT National resubmitted their application and down sized their array to accommodate just their needs. The town has 45 days to respond to the PSB.

Windham Regional Commission will be writing a letter on the town’s behalf. The Select Board resent their letter of concern as well on the development of solar arrays in the Westminster Industrial Park

c) **Article VI:** Page 45, Section 618.3 Buffer Strips around Wetlands and Surface Watercourses. A question relative to “zoning buffers” from the Commission was discussed whether buffer zones should be 50’ in the Bylaws along streams and rivers. Russ Hodgkins commented that the state is currently working on amending buffer zones but he does not know at this time what the decision is or will be. He is reluctant to make any changes until the 2017 implementation by the state. **Kathy Kingston made a motion to change the buffer zones along unnamed streams from 20’ to 50’.** **Chris Vincent 2nd the motion. Motion passed 0-4-2.**

Kathy will look into this further. John Barnett made a motion to table the discussion. Matt Conklin seconded the motion. Motion passed.

d) **Article VII – Planned Unit Development (if time allows):** The Commission ran out of time for this discussion. Will commence at May 9, 2016 regular scheduled meeting.

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

The ZA informed the Planning Commission of the violation that has impacted several parties relative to stormwater runoff from State Police Public Safety Facility onto the town property, down a steep embankment and into the Newcombe Brook. Site meeting is planned and further discussion about mitigation will be dealt with as plans progress.

8. DATE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING: May 9, 2016 at 7:00 P.M.

9. ADJOURNMENT: John Barnett made a motion to adjourn at 8:41 PM and Randy Major seconded. The motion passed and the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

Signature of Clerk

Date

Prepared by: Karen Astley – Recording Clerk