

Plainfield Planning Commission Meeting

August 3, 2015

Present: Karen Storey, Will Colgan, Paula Emery, Cito Hardy, Jean Hamilton. Sacha Peeler and Rebecca Tharp.

Becky is a Land Use Planning and Water Quality Educator from UVM's Sea Grant program, which is funded by NOAA. She is here to see how this program can be helpful. Their emphasis is on education, so they can help to organize a mailing or an event.

Contact Info for Becky: rtharp@uvm.edu or 656-2514.

Agenda: Approval of minutes from previous meeting; Policy for Refunds on Permits not Executed; River Corridor Unified Zoning.

Approval of Minutes:

Cito moved, Karen seconded. Minutes Approved.

Policy for Refunds on Permits not Executed: Will proposed a policy on refunds for permits: A permit is eligible for a refund if the cost incurred by the town does not exceed the cost of the permit.

Information: the price of the permit is to cover the town's costs. Did person's need/desire for a refund incur a cost to the town (labor of Town Clerk's office, labor of Zoning Administrator).

Should the town decline a refund if any work takes place? The applicant is responsible for their own due diligence.

Should the town's tax-funded pay to the Zoning Administrator and Town Clerk include the labor on the fees.

Proposed Language: A permit is eligible for a refund if no documented expense has been incurred by the town.

Cito moved, Jean seconded. The motion approved with Karen's abstention.

River Corridor Unified Zoning:

Sacha Peeler was a guest. She began by clarifying that the Flood Insurance Program has a different set of definitions. Buildings can be in the River Corridor, but not in the Flood Hazard area.

1. FEMA defines these areas regularly and they are defined for insurance purposes.
2. FEMA maps are specific to certain sized floods, particularly the 100 year flood, whereas the town's map is different and includes the river corridor.
3. This river corridor is split by the town and the state when it comes to damage that isn't covered by FEMA money. For this reason, the state is trying to get towns to
 - a. participate in national flood insurance program
 - b. AOT up to date road and bridge standards
 - c. local emergency operations plan up to date
 - d. up to date hazard mitigation plan (every 5 years)
4. IF you have all of the above you get 17.5% ERAF funding.

Plainfield is unique in that it has protected its flood plains in it's Town Plan. This got us the 17.5% as an early adopter.

The River Corridor protection is going to run out, but the original date of October, 2015 has been extended.

The Plainfield River Corridor includes the Fluvial Erosion and the Landslide Mitigation zones. FEMA has very specific standards about new construction in the Fluvial Erosion Zone and Inundation Zone, but the Town of Plainfield's are more specific.

Karen: we need to define "storage" in our Zoning Regulations.

What is "storage"? Sacha will send us a definition of storage that we can put in the regs.

The real issue here is how the things upstream end up downstream. To what extend is the Planning Commission responsible for the education of people along the Brook.

– Great Brook has been studied with more detail than most rivers in the state. The Winooski has been mapped, but to a lesser extent.

What we could do so that we can qualify for ERAF is do Winooski Corridor upstream from the village and downstream from the village.

Fences & Storage Sheds: Fences are included in "development" but Plainfield doesn't restrict development under 4' tall or sheds smaller than 10 x 10. So these things can go in without zoning. There's a long list of exemptions, so anyone along the rivers don't apply for zoning permits.

Use the State's Flood Hazard Reg 4 River Corridors document as a template. If you make changes send them to for review.

Add a paragraph – in narrative form – explaining what the purpose of the document is. See East Montpelier's language because they did the same thing.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28PM