

# **Town of Dorset Planning Commission**

## **September 6, 2016**

**Members Present:** Brooks Addington (Chairperson), Gay Squire, Carter Rawson, Charlie Wise, Kit Wallace, Brett Herrmann, and Scott Thompson, Dick Coss.

**Members Absent:** Adam Danaker

**Also Present:** Tyler Yandow (Zoning Administrator), Joan Menson, Nancy Lacey, D. Greene, Ellen Maloney (Dorset Energy Committee), and Jim Sullivan, BCRC.

B. Addington, Chairman, opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

**Chair to Note Any Changes to Agenda:**

One thing to note: item 10: Resolution in the packet that the PC should pass to apply for a Municipal Planning Grant.

**Disclosure of Any Conflicts of Interest:**

None noted

**Have Board Members Introduce Themselves.**

**Invite Other Attendees To Do The Same and State Why They Are Attending**

Waived

**Approve Minutes of August 2, 2016**

K. Wallace moved G. Squire seconded. Motion carried 8-0.

**Report from the Zoning Administrator**

T. Yandow reports as follows:

- Violations: 108 Church Street -The ZA received an email from the owner replying to the Design Review Board's site visit notes
- Issued 4 permits in the last month
- Crosswalk project: Town will apply for a Municipal Planning Grant to pay for part of the cost. Working with BCRC on this.
- No ZBA meeting to report on tonight.

### **Report from Representative to the BCRC**

- The next BCRC meeting is on September 15 at 5:30 (food first) in Manchester at the Library.

### **Report from the Design Review Board**

- 108 Church Street. The DRB met with the owner and asked that he replace the trim board with the original herringbone detail and replace the columns to the original shingled columns. The columns have been returned to the original design and the DRB is willing to approve the newly designed center steps.
- Discussion followed on violations concerning this property. B. Addington stated that the DRB should draft a document as part of the record essentially closing the case.

### **4 Lot Major Subdivision: 627 Dorset West Road.**

- This project was in the A&RR, Ridgeline & Mountainside Conservation Zones. Owner: Jack & Angela Appelman. Application withdrawn.

### **Discussion of S260: Now Act 174**

- A bill regarding the siting of alternative energy projects and development of a town energy plan. Jim Sullivan/BCRC and Town Energy Committee.
- J. Sullivan brought in handouts: Section of Act: 30 VSA Section 248
  - Setback requirements for solar facilities.
- 24 VSA Section 4414: Planning Act
  - Establishes screening for solar plants
- The Town of Bennington's Ordinance regarding screening requirements for solar facilities was also presented as an example.
- Act 174 is an Act that ties land use planning with energy projects.
- This legislation has been passed but the implementation is in progress.

Legislation outlines a way for towns to set up a comprehensive energy plan. 'The Public Service Board gives substantial deference to land conservation measures contained in a regional and municipal plan that has received an affirmative determination of energy compliance.'

BCRC doesn't have an energy plan yet, but they do have a draft plan. There will be public hearings on this plan during the winter.

Quite a lot of discussion on the explanation of this topic.

Siting of these energy facilities is a concern. Should we site where to or not to put these facilities?

The Public Service Department doesn't want each town to list a lot of places where you **cannot** site these facilities; you can't say we have no place to site a renewable energy facility. Dorset would have to establish places where a facility would work. Also, there are specific areas on a map in Bennington County where solar and wind energy would work.

Jim Sullivan as well as a member from the audience noted that there is a huge educational component to this. Solar panels are just a tiny part. The object is to have a reduction in energy use as well as local generation of energy.

G. Squire: how is this all going to proceed?

B. Addington: a stretch for us to create our own plan. Probably want to come from the top down...have the Regional Plan changed first, then Dorset's Plan.

These energy plans can be formatted with guidance from the Regional Plan and each town's own Town Plan. This will not be a stand-alone document.

### **Community Energy Dashboard**

- This is a non-profit energy forum that is a wealth of information on how other communities have been studying their energy needs.
- Fifteen towns in the state have been identified as towns that would be good for an educational webinar to learn how to use this Community Energy Dashboard. Dorset is one of them.
- The Dashboard is a tool that would help in this application process.

Training will be available on the plan process by the first of November.

Timeline: BCRC have a finalized plan approved and adopted by this winter

Is Dorset about 5 months out from submitting a plan?

We can attend webinars, go to BCRC meetings, etc.

**Review proposed crosswalk documents from the BCRC Transportation Planner Mark Anders.**

- The PC has a Resolution for Municipal Planning Grant
- It would bring someone in to identify the pedestrian problem/solution to the Town core of Dorset.
- This is a reasonable way to enhance the town to make nicer more usable sidewalks to make it safer.
- B. Addington suggested we all have a positive attitude toward this idea. We would not be changing Dorset, just upgrading some sidewalks, resurrecting some and possibly creating some new sidewalks.

B. Addington made a motion to approve and sign the Resolution for the Municipal Planning Grant for a Dorset Walkable Solution.

G. Squire second

Approved 8-0.

**Public Comments Taken**

None

**Other Business**

J Menson asked: regarding the notice up at the Post Office: Dorset PC requests public input? This will be on the next PC meeting agenda.

**Meeting Adjourned at 9:05 PM**

Respectfully Submitted:

Rebecca M. Nawrath