

Town of Hinesburg PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday September 14, 2011

Approved October 12, 2011

Members Present: Kyle Bostwick, Carrie Fenn, Johanna White, Jean Isham,
Ray Mainer arrived at 8:50pm making a quorum

Members Absent: Tim Clancy, Bob Linck, Tom Ayer, Joe Iadanza

Also Present: Alex Weinhagen (Planning/Zoning Director), Mary Seemann (Recording Secretary), Bill Marks, Maggie Gordon

Jean I called the meeting to order @ 7:44 pm. There were not enough Commissioners at the start of the meeting to have a quorum. This was discussed and it was decided the meeting would continue. *(Ray Mainer arrived @ 8:50pm which gave the Commission a quorum).*

Jean I gave a quick overview of the agenda for the meeting.

Rural Area Regulation Revisions – *(continued from August 10, 2011).*

Addressing Scenic Resources: With input from invited guest - Diane Gayer, VT Design Institute.

- Design standards for addressing scenic resources-existing Hinesburg language vs. examples from other towns.
- Locating scenic resources-input on preliminary map and need for community input.
- Defining scenic resources.

Rural Area Regulation Revision - Addressing Cultural Resources.

- Conservation Subdivision Design Standards – cultural resources as a secondary resource.
- Types of cultural resources; historic structures inventory.
- Non-regulatory options for preserving cultural resources.

Alex W said he was pleased having Diane G as the guest speaker. He said he is hoping what she will discuss with the Commission tonight can be merged with what was discussed at the last Planning Commission meeting on Scenic Resources; how to define what the resources are and where they are. **Alex W** said he thought a map would be a good springboard for engaging the public in the discussion of the “what” and “where”.

Alex W said at the last meeting he asked the Commissioners to look at other towns design standards, especially on their scenic resources, to see if there were any ideas Hinesburg could incorporate or dovetail into what they presently have.

Jean I introduced the night’s guest speaker, Diane Gayer.

Diane G said she went through the notes from the last Planning Commission meeting and she had some questions. She said she wanted to start off talking about the map as she feels it is not self-evident to what it actually says. She said she feels it is important to understand what the map is saying and what it isn't saying and with the current map she is not convinced the map is saying what the Commissioners want it to say. She said the map needs to be clearer.

Jean I agreed with Diane's critique on the clarity of the map and said she was thinking the map could be the starting point for Scenic Resources.

Diane G said the Commissioners shouldn't get caught up on aesthetics as aesthetics are many different things when one looks at Scenic Views, Vistas, Corridors and Viewsheds. These areas should be what has been agreed to by all as important places within the community and suggested the Commission start with having the public say what is important to them and what they consider as Scenic Resources.

Jean I suggested a map on the website where people could put pins in the areas they think are important.

The Commission reviewed the Hinesburg town plan regarding Scenic Resources where it states "shall be in locations least likely to block or interrupt scenic vistas as seen from the public roadways." They also talked about:

- using overlays as another tool.
- the important elements at each point needed to be listed.
- the protected areas within the scenic vistas.
- to remember scenic vs visible, they are not necessarily the same.
- the more investment/involvement in the map, the more it builds awareness.
- applying clear language.

Jean I said she liked the excerpt from Jericho's Scenic Resources and the pictures in their handouts make it easier to read and more interesting to look at. She suggested these be shown at a public meeting to get input.

The Commissioners reviewed Charlotte's Scenic Overlay districts noting the specific standards in these districts and discussed taking some of those ideas and incorporating them into Hinesburg's standards.

Bill Marks said the Land works map was generated from a public forum. He said there were a fair amount of people who gave input.

Diane G said regulations and guidelines can be dovetailed into the current design standards and the Commissioners should try to incorporate any concerns they have into the existing standards.

There were discussions on houses on ridgelines, and what is the maximum grade on roads.

Carrie F expressed the map would be better if the 25% or greater slopes would jump out at you more.

Jean I said she had a pretty good grasp as to where all this discussion was going. She said the Commission needs to give the public a chance to see where this is going. **Jean I** pointed out that the Planning Commission meetings don't draw a lot of people to their evening meetings so perhaps a weekend meeting might work.

Diane G said that would be great and the Commission should give the public a checklist of sorts to help them with their suggestions. Maybe break down into teams with a survey list and comment sheet to fill out before, during and after their field trips.

Jean I asked if there were any other questions, no response.

Diane G said it looked like the Commissioners were on their way to getting public input. She said if the Commission wants to run ideas by her she will be happy to look at them and said she does want to see how it all turns out.

Jean I said there would have to be publicity to let people know about this meeting and it was discussed as to how to inform the public. Such suggestions as The Front Porch Forum, and The Record.

Kyle B suggested we implement something online, on the town's website. He suggested putting a notice in the water bills, have handouts every Saturday at soccer games or any other public event.

The meeting moved next to Cultural Resources.

Carrie F said she got a state map that is a resource on historic homes that are registered by the state, there are 40. She gave an example of one house on the map showing a picture and giving some information on it. She asked if the Commission, as part of our cultural resources, make a developer get this type of information to see what they are dealing with.

Alex W said there are different levels of historic homes and there is only one on the National Historic Register in Hinesburg, the Peck house on Mechanicsville Road.

Bill M asked if the Planning Commission was interested could they put restrictions on any remodeling of older homes.

There was a discussion on demolishing older homes, and what age are they considered historic.

Carrie F suggested making demolition a Conditional Use. She said she thinks that would be worth doing and it must also include barns. **Carrie F** showed a booklet the state sent her regarding Historic Homes and she gave it to Maggie Gordon for the Historical Society.

Alex W asked the Planning Commissioners their thoughts about putting "Conditional Use" on the demolishing of older homes. He said an alternative would be to require a Zoning Permit prior to demolition. If the house is on the historic list then the Planning & Zoning office could inform applicant/landowner as well as the Historical Society in order for pictures to be taken of the home.

Carrie F suggested adding the following definition of "cultural feature" to the regulations, "A cultural feature is a historic (over 100 years old) or archeological site such as structures (e.g., house, barn, shop), cellar holes, stonewalls, or other evidence of past human habitation or industry.

Jean I said speaking of Historic Houses, perhaps a house tour of Hinesburg's oldest homes and barns could be an activity that would be combined with the towns 250 birthday.

Minutes from: August 24, 2011.

Ray M moved to accept as amended, **Carrie F** seconded. A vote was taken.

[THE MOTION PASSED](#) .

Other Business & Announcements.

Alex W reminded everyone that the Hannaford review starts on Tuesday the 20th. He said Hannaford's changed a lot of technical details such as lighting, removing the drive thru, eliminating parking spaces, having the store close at 10pm and not 11pm, and their agreement with Lantman's should they be approved. They reached an agreement with Estey's/Aubuchon that the Firehouse Plaza access into the mall will be moved further east, away from Route 116. The Stormwater plan is the same.

Jean I closed the meeting @ 9:55pm

Next scheduled meeting: September 28, 2011

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Seemann
Recording Secretary