



Town of Hinesburg
Planning & Zoning Department
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Selectboard
FROM: Alex Weinhausen, Director of Planning & Zoning
DATE: July 30, 2014
RE: Planning & Zoning Fee Schedule Revision – additional information requested

At your May 19, 2014 meeting I presented proposed revisions to the Planning & Zoning fee schedule. Changes from the current fee schedule were highlighted in yellow. In a nutshell, three basic changes are proposed: 1) require a new fee when an applicant requests a conditional certificate of occupancy; 2) base the site plan review fee on the size/scope of the project (i.e., larger projects pay a higher fee); 3) require an applicant to cover the cost if the DRB deems an independent review necessary. At that meeting, you asked me to provide some examples of actual costs for independent engineering review. I believe Renae forwarded you my 5/29/14 email with this information. The upshot was that the DRB hasn't required third party review very often. In three instances this was paid for by the applicant (\$360, \$900, \$245). In three other instances, this was paid for by the Town (\$997.50, \$500, \$660).

You discussed this proposal again at your June 4 meeting. Per Renae's notes and the meeting minutes, both Mike Bissonette and Tom Ayer expressed concern about requiring that applicants cover the cost of independent reviews. The Board requested that I find language from other communities to compare with the language I proposed (in note #14 of the proposed fee schedule). The Board also requested that I provide fee structures from other towns for comparison. I collected fee schedules from 13 other Chittenden County municipalities (see attached pdf file) – not included are the towns of Bolton, Buels Gore, Winooski.

I contacted those municipalities whose fee schedules didn't clearly address responsibility for the cost of third party reviews. Of the 13 municipalities, eight include a requirement that applicants cover the cost of third party reviews. Of the remaining five municipalities, I was unable to verify whether or not they had this provision for two (Charlotte & Huntington). The other three are larger towns that have in-house staff with the expertise to provide the necessary review – i.e., Essex (town engineer), Milton (public works expertise), Williston (public works expertise). For the eight municipalities with the provision, the language varies, but in no cases does it provide a limit or cap. Instead, many simply say that the applicant shall cover the "reasonable cost" of a third party review deemed necessary by the DRB.

I will be at your August 7 meeting to follow up on this discussion.