

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Tracy Hall - Meeting Room

Members Present: Tom Gray, Richard Stucker, Lynn McGrew, Ralph Hybels

Members Absent: Adele Fulton Daniel Johnson, Jaye Pershing Johnson

Staff: Phil Dechert **Others:** Craig Layne

The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

1. Approve Agenda - The agenda was approved with one addition by **unanimous consent**.

2. Zoning Draft (February 21, 2008 Draft)

Craig Layne, Chair of the Norwich Conservation Commission appeared to discuss changes in the current draft of the zoning regulations regarding the development envelope review criteria in Section 3.13(B).

He suggested that by limiting fragmentation of continuous forest, wildlife habitat would be protected. The existing forest resources 3.13(B)(2) could be modified for this purpose.

Stucker moved to recommend to the Selectboard that 3.13(B)(2) be changed to:

“Forest Resources and Wildlife Habitat – Development shall be located and configured to minimize fragmentation of contiguous forest.”

Gray seconded the motion and the vote was 2 – yes (Hybels & McGrew), 1 – No (Gray), 1 abstain (Stucker). Stucker then moved the same motion substituting “should” for “shall” and adding “The Norwich Planning Commission agrees to meet with Jens Hilke from ANR to craft an acceptable alternative improved version of Section 3.13(B)(2).” The motion was seconded by Gray and passed 4-0.

Vernal Pools - Layne explained that because remote sensing (aerial infra-red) was used as the primary source for the mapping of vernal pools, the inventory is not based upon the willingness of land owners, contacted by the NCC, to allow confirmation of vernal pools on their property. It was agreed that the vernal pool inventory could be used for regulatory purposes. A buffer of 50' is also recommended.

Stucker moved to recommend to the Selectboard that vernal pools as depicted on the NCC Vernal Pool Inventory be added to Section 3.13(A) as a feature from which new development may not occur within 50 feet. The motion was seconded by Gray and passed 4-0.

The Clerk will prepare the specific wording for this recommended change and send it out for review.

Selectboard Meeting – Dechert reported that after their March 12 public meeting for comments on the Zoning Draft, the Selectboard deferred any decision regarding warning a public hearing and a legal review until their April 9, 2008 meeting.

3. Planning Commission Membership –

There was agreement that the planning commission membership should be increased back to nine members if qualified citizens are willing to apply. Stucker will communicate this to the Selectboard members.

4. Town Plan –

The Housing Draft and Community Profile Draft were accepted with no major changes needed except for additional information as noted in the drafts.

6. Acting Zoning Administrator

On March 12, 2008, the Selectboard adopted the proposed Acting Zoning Administrator Policy and appointed the Chair of the Planning Commission, Daniel Johnson, as Acting Zoning Administrator for as long as he is Chair of the Planning Commission.

- 6. Minutes –** February 5, 2008 Approved with minor change
February 28, 2008 Approved with minor change

7. Adjournment - 9:55 PM.

Phil Dechert

APPROVED 4-10-08

Future Meetings:

Thursday, March 27 - 7 PM – No Meeting

Thursday, April 10 - 7 PM – Regular Meeting