

**MINUTES OF THE SHAFTSBURY PLANNING BOARD
NOVEMBER 25, 2008
COLE HALL
SHAFTSBURY, VERMONT**

Board Present: **Bill Pennebaker, Norm St. Onge, Craig Bruder (Chairman), Chris Williams, Bob Carter**

Others Present: **Tony Zazzaro (Zoning Administrator), Jim Sullivan (BCRC), Lon McClintock (Select Board), Susan Swasta (Recording Secretary)**

1. Call Meeting to Order:

Chairman Craig Bruder called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Minutes:

October 14, 2008 Minutes

Norm St. Onge made motion to approve the October 14, 2008 minutes. Bill Pennebaker seconded.

The following correction to the October 14, 2008 minutes was requested:

On page 2, paragraph two, in the second sentence "id" is changed to "if."

Motion to approve October 14, 2008 minutes as amended carried 5-0-0.

Approval of the October 28 minutes was tabled until later in the meeting.

3. Old Business:

A. BCRC Presentation of Updates and Recommendations to Town Plan

Jim Sullivan of the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) came to the table for review of his Town Plan additions and revisions. He stated that he had made no major structural changes. He said that he had gone through the document, did some reorganizing within sections, and provided updated statistics, mostly in chapter three. Mr. Sullivan said that he updated all that he could in chapter three, but that much of it is census data, which could not be further updated.

He said that the other section that required updating was municipal finance. Most of the updates were on municipal expenditures from the annual town report, and on tax rates. Mr. Sullivan said that he updated other statistics throughout the Plan where numbers were available. He also put in new maps and pictures.

Mr. Sullivan stated that he had added language to chapter 12, on housing. He suggested that additional information on affordable housing prepared by a Bennington College intern could be cut and pasted in. The intern did a study on the use of reclaimed gravel pit land for affordable housing. Mr. Sullivan said that he had added a little language on child care services and on energy so that the Plan lines up with Chapter 117 goals.

He stated that he will need to look at the Planning Commission's new draft of the Plan. Chairman Bruder said that the new draft only has some added information on water resources from Josh Gorman of the Agency of Natural Resources Water Quality Division. They will go over that tonight. Chairman Bruder asked if there are any questions for Mr. Sullivan. No one had questions. Chairman Bruder stated that tonight they will review several pieces added to the Plan by outside sources, and expect to leave the meeting with the final draft.

B. Continued Discussion/Compilation of Data and Final Review for Town Plan Revision

Chairman Bruder went over the additions and changes suggested by Lon McClintock which had been emailed to Planning Commission members. There was brief discussion of Mr. McClintock's addition to the section on capital planning, and the new language was then adopted as written. It was also agreed to adopt as written Mr. McClintock's new first paragraph for section 2.1, and his new language for sections 2.10 and 2.11. Chairman Bruder thanked Mr. McClintock for his input.

Chris Williams stated that he had met with School Board Chairwoman Betty Benedict, and had updated the section on schools. He is still missing a few pieces of data. Mr. McClintock recommended a person for Mr. Williams to contact for the missing information. Mr. Williams stated that he wants to add some recommendations to the section on schools. One would be to push consolidation with the North Bennington School. Another would encourage consolidation of SVSU school boards into a single governing body. A third recommendation would be to break down the artificial dichotomy between the Shaftsbury School Board and Select Board.

Mr. McClintock noted that the state has established two different municipal entities -- one that runs towns, and one that runs schools. These cannot be unified. Mr. Williams replied that even if the structure cannot change, there can be better integration and communication. Mr. McClintock said he is not sure how this would play out in the Town Plan. Mr. Williams reiterated that, recognizing state strictures, they should still strive for maximum cooperation and collaboration. Mr. McClintock said he could agree with that.

Mr. McClintock said he would not approve of a consolidated school board because it would not be sensitive to the needs and values of the smaller school communities. He said that he will not comment on the issue of consolidation of Shaftsbury and North Bennington schools. There was discussion of school issues, including the possibility of allowing students from Bennington to pay tuition to attend the Shaftsbury and North Bennington schools.

Chairman Bruder asked what Planning Commission consensus is with regard to recommendations on schools. Bob Carter suggested that one recommendation include language on bringing in tuition-paying students from surrounding communities. Mr. McClintock suggested a recommendation on more collaboration between Town and School governments. Chairman Bruder suggested language for a recommendation to the effect that as the situation with decreased student population and increased costs persists, they will continue to look closely at additional means of collaboration, and possible consolidation, of the Shaftsbury and North Bennington schools.

There was discussion of the section on recreation submitted by the Recreation Committee. Mr. St. Onge said he will blend their addition into the current sections 11.1 and 11.4. It was agreed to add language supporting snowmobiles to the first paragraph of 11.4.

Chairman Bruder asked if there is anything to be added to the section on the historic district. Mr. Pennebaker replied that Historical Society President Norm Gronning would like to see language added on expansion of the historic district to the north, and on the addition of individual buildings. After discussion, it was decided to add less specific wording on identifying further properties for inclusion in the historic district.

Mr. Sullivan stated that he will integrate some of the language on affordable housing tomorrow and get back to them right away. He won't change anything on policy. Mr. Sullivan and Mr. McClintock left the meeting at 8:50 PM.

Chairman Bruder asked if there are any other changes to the Town Plan. Mr. Pennebaker went over his list of minor changes throughout the document, and those that had not already been made (because Mr. Pennebaker's draft was evidently an earlier one) were adopted.

C. Schedule Public Hearing Date for Plan Review

Chairman Bruder said that, in order to meet the thirty-day warning requirement, they will need to set a public hearing date as soon as the draft comes back from Mr. Sullivan. He will have Mr. Zazzaro warn a meeting that day.

4. New Business:

Chairman Bruder stated that Mr. Carter wrote a Planning Commission report for inclusion in the Town annual report. Chairman Bruder said that he had made some additions. He will submit it to the Town Clerk.

Chairman Bruder asked if anyone has issues to raise on the Planning Commission budget as prepared by Mr. Zazzaro. No one did. The budget will be submitted to the Select Board.

Chairman Bruder noted that the Planning Commission's gravel pit study is on the Select Board agenda for this Monday. He asked that all who can attend the meeting do so.

2. Minutes (cont'd.):

October 28, 2008 Minutes

Mr. Williams made motion to approve the October 28, 2008 minutes. Mr. Pennebaker seconded.

Motion carried 4-0-1. (Mr. Carter abstained because he had not attended that meeting.)

Meeting went into Executive Session (Personnel) at 9:35 PM.

Meeting adjourned at PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Swasta