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Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

Meeting Minutes

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Planning Commission

Date of Meeting: March 26th, 2025 in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Nancy Burns (chair), Mike Foley, Emily Cowperthwaite, and Mike Algus. Martha Cornwell from the select board was also present. Callie Fishburn and Samantha Page from BCRC were present in person. Also present was zoning administrator Carlyn Mickle.

1. Call to order

The meeting came to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Minutes

Ms. Burns moved to approve the March 12th, 2025 minutes. Mr. Algus seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

3. Municipal Consultation: Callie Fishburn, BCRC

Improvement notes for Town Plan:

- Implementation Table for action items
- Expanding on some topic areas such as economic development and the BCRC study completed for South Shaftsbury.
- Ms. Cornwell spoke about the planning commission noting at a previous meeting a desire to see an increase in the Recreation section and mapping of all publicly available trails.
- Mr. Algus recommended follow up of right of ways with private property owners. He brought up the idea that has previously surfaced around the construction of an observation deck and more signage for Howard Park.

Ms. Mickle introduced questions around document review, as well as grant availability in regard to a Municipal Planning Grant and a grant for the proposed Town wastewater system.

Ms. Fishburn noted the availability of training for Land Use Regulations. Ms. Page noted the availability of other training opportunities. Ms. Burns showed interest in Septic and Solid Waste training, Mr. Foley showed interest in any housing/road frontage information. Ms. Cornwell suggests contacting Rick Bennet or Paula to review the BCRC study presentation. Ms. Fishburn suggested the BCRC Home Sprawl Tool Kit as a reference for case studies and model designs and sample proformas.

Ms. Page mentioned the Municipal Planning Grant cycle will reopen in the fall, Ms. Cornwell noted the desire for a revision of bylaw. Ms. Cornwell also brings up the potential need for boundary line adjustments and zoning alterations to some of the downtown area to support the workforce housing and septic needs.

Ms. Fishburn brought up the DRB and wondered if there are any needs associated with this board. She also asked about non-regulatory needs.

- Ms. Cornwell brought up the need for solid ground to allow for multi-unit dwellings, determining how to maximize density in the 1-3 acre properties in the VC area.
- Ms. Burns brought up the limitations of our waste water systems on economic development.

Ms. Fishburn brought up that BCRC programs can assist municipalities including a transportation planner, solid waste program manager, energy program, environmental program (water quality, road erosion, emergency management planner), community and economic development program. They are available for TA and some mapping support.

4. Future Land Use Mapping: Ms. Samantha Page, BCRC

- Act 181 has an effect on regional planning (land use mapping, housing targets, environmental justice, and XYZ) The hope, though not a requirement, is that the regional map will be referenced for our own local map. This is conceptual and can support zoning maps in the future.
- Act 181 requirement for Regional Planning Commissions will create uniformity across the state with 10 categories. The implications are:
 - There are exemptions for Act 250 for Tier 1A and 1B for subdivision/developments/permits for projects less than 50 units.
 - Center Designations will be automatically entered at step 2 which will include priorities for funding, authority for special taxing, sewer permit fees capped, etc.
- Reviewed current map as mentioned above. In this map is suggested an expansion of the VC zoning district (please see 6:55pm on zoom to view map) and a proposed “Village Areas”. Ms. Page expressed a desire that PC support the mapping of the area labeled “Enterprise” “Rural Ag and Forestry” etc. for accuracy.

- Timeline: meetings for the first half of the year, broad outreach through the summer, adoption process in 2026.

5. Other business

None

Mr. Foley moved to adjourn at 7:19 p.m. Mr Albus seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.