

Land Use Regulation Update Committee *Town of Ferrisburgh, Vt.*

FINAL – Minutes for meeting of May 28, 2019; approved on June 5, 2019.

Members present: Arabella Holzapfel (chair), Bonnie Barnes, Bob Beach, Gail Blasius, Carl Cole, Clark Hinsdale, Karen Pettersen.

1. Call to order. Arabella Holzapfel called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

2. Approval of minutes. A quorum of members who had attended the last meeting on May 1 was not in attendance on May 28, so a vote on the May 1 minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

3. Announcements. Arabella Holzapfel told the committee that Brandy Saxton had been hired to tackle several pieces of the zoning bylaws rewrite. She will be paid \$3,400 for her work, through the end of the fiscal year on June 30. She will help the committee draft rules and standards on Planned Unit Developments; On-Farm and Home-Based Businesses; Water Resource Protection; Erosion Control and Stormwater Management; and Flood Hazard and River Corridor Overlay Districts. The committee expects to hire Saxton for further work in the new fiscal year.

Bonnie Barnes said road foreman John Bull would be available to talk with the committee about road access issues. Barnes said she would invite Bull to attend the next meeting on June 5.

Arabella Holzapfel said committee member Dave Mentzer continues to work on a report addressing the spectrum of design standards that can be used as part of a town's zoning bylaws.

She also said she was going to update the selectboard at its next meeting, on June 4, about what the committee has been up to and the work they've asked Brandy Saxton to take on.

Bonnie Barnes said she had been contacted by a colleague who works for the state, who noted that North Ferrisburgh seemed to have a great deal of community spirit, and wondered whether the town would like to talk with state experts about designating the area as a village within Ferrisburgh. Board members thought it made sense to hear what the state expert has to say, and Barnes said she would see about inviting one of the experts to the committee's June 25 meeting. She also said she would ask for some information on the process and the pros and cons of village designation to share with committee members in advance.

4. Work plan review and action plan. Board members went through a work plan developed by Arabella Holzapfel, which discusses next steps on various parts of the land use regulations rewrite. Quite a few are now being handled by consultant Brandy Saxton.

Others are going to be discussed when Dave Mentzer completes his report on design standards as they apply to zoning bylaws. Some other items that were discussed:

- Natural resources and wildlife habitat: The committee is hoping to have the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission weigh in on these questions.
- Recreation trails: Anne Cohn, a committee member, is being asked to lead the investigation of this topic.
- Route 7 corridor: Carl Cole has shared work done on this topic by Katie Hill and the Citizens Advisory Committee about 10 years ago. Some members had not yet seen the material and Arabella Holzapfel said she would send it out to everyone.
- Clark Hinsdale, who is also on the selectboard, said there had been a discussion with Vergennes officials at a recent meeting about the possibility of a Route 7/Route 22 bypass that would run along the western edge of the city, and possibly through parts of Ferrisburgh. Hinsdale and other committee members thought the town needed to be very involved in any discussions of a bypass.
- There was a brief discussion of the Shoreland District and its evolution, which had a lot to do with the existence of Basin Harbor Club. Bob Beach said many of the conditional uses allowed in the district are things that have been or are being done at Basin Harbor. He said it will be interesting to hear what Brandy Saxton thinks about the Shoreland District, and how the state's adoption of the Shoreland Protection Act is affecting use of the town's lakeshore areas. He also said other things can happen in the Shoreland District that are not now in the use table and the town should look at uses it might want to add. Karen Pettersen, who is a Long Point resident, said Long Point did not seem interested in new uses, or in further development. Clark Hinsdale, who owns land on the lake north of Long Point, said it might make sense to expand the Shoreland District into "backlands," or property not in the currently defined Shoreland District (within 250 feet of the lake) but that is used by lakeshore property owners.

5. Route 7 corridor review and identification of issues. Carl Cole has shared work done on this topic by Katie Hill and the Citizens Advisory Committee about 10 years ago. Some members had not yet seen the material and Arabella Holzapfel said she would send it out to everyone.

6. Conserved land discussion. Karen Pettersen, who is also a member of the Conservation Commission, said the Land Use Regulation Update Committee would need to look closely at a suggestion to add conserved land to the town's existing Conservation District. She and others agreed that there are many types of conservation easements, and not all of the land subject to these easements would make sense in the Conservation District. Bob Beach said he felt the town's position should lean toward allowing people an opportunity to make a living on their land, while still respecting the rights of neighbors. Bonnie Barnes said it would be a tough sell to apply 25-acre zoning, the current standard in the Conservation District, to more land in the town.

7. Other business. There was a brief discussion about people who are living, long-term, in mobile homes and campers. The town has regulations covering this, but they are sometimes ignored, and the town really doesn't discover violations unless they are alerted

by neighbors. Even then, enforcement, which can involve fines, is tricky. The discussion then turned to Airbnb offerings, short term rentals that do require conditional use permits, which are being treated as tourist homes under the current zoning bylaws. It was noted that many lakeshore property owners have been renting out their cottages for both short and long terms for many years.

8. Next meeting agenda. John Bull will be invited to the next meeting, as will Katie Hill, who worked with the Citizens Advisory Committee on Route 7 corridor issues. It's also expected that committee member Jean Richardson will be able to attend and help with a discussion of a possible village designation for North Ferrisburgh.

9. Adjournment. Clark Hinsdale made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m. Gail Blasius seconded. All voted in favor. **Motion approved.**

— Respectfully submitted,

Tim Etchells