

Town of Bolton
3045 Theodore Roosevelt Highway
Bolton VT 05676
802-434-5075

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2008

Planning Commission members present: Linda Baker, Chair, Jen Andrews, Steve Barner, Rodney Pingree

Planning Commission members absent: Jim Bralich

Also Present: David Parrot

Clerk: Amy Grover

Agenda

1. Review possible amendments to the Bolton Land Use and Development Regulations
 2. Complete CCRPC 2008 Municipal Needs Survey
 3. Minutes ~ December 12, 2007
 4. Other communications/mail
 5. Any other business
 6. Adjournment
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Call to Order

Linda Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Agenda Item #1 ~ Review possible amendments to the Bolton Land Use and Development Regulations

The group reviewed the list of potential changes/updates to the BLUDR's drafted by Sharon Murray as follows;

Article I. Authority & Purpose

- *Table 1.1 – delete reference to municipal septic permits.*

Discussion: Note that municipal septic permits are subject to state authority, insert language such as: "State permits apply here" for clarification. Note a future option: if the Bolton ZA has the necessary education, knowledge, and experience to oversee the septic permitting process, the town could request authority from the state to take over septic permits. This would not be a viable option at this time.

Article II. Zoning Districts

- *Update flood hazard district references.*

Discussion: How has the state changed the references? Does this include updated FEMA maps? Amy to check with Sharon.

Zoning District Tables

- *Table 2.1 Village District – add “Equipment Services & Repair” as a conditional use, others? Add basic village design standards (e.g., minimum height requirements?)*

Discussion: “Equipment Services and Repair”, i.e. Sykes business, is a reasonable addition, add that language. Do not add additional basic village design standards, and especially do not add minimum height standards, considering the need to encourage green/energy efficient buildings.

- *Table 2.2 Resort Village – revise definition of “Alpine Ski Facility” to all for use of trails for mountain biking, etc.?*

Discussion: After lengthy discussion the group noted that the definition for the “Alpine Skiing Facility” should stand as is, and to add additional language that would allow for alternate/summer use of the alpine ski trails as a conditional use. Possible draft language; “multi-use recreational non-motorized trails (such as mountain biking, horseback riding, disc golf)”. “Multi-use recreational non-motorized trails” language would also need to be inserted into Section 3.16 Steep Slopes, B. 2. on page 39. The group noted that summer use would require that issues such as erosion control and precipitation management be addressed, but it was also understood that summer use would surely assist in allowing the resort to stay viable on a year round basis. The group noted that input from Bolton Valley on potential uses would be helpful.

David Parrot expressed concern regarding the Michelin off-road driving school at Bolton Valley Resort and stated that:

- The driving school permits vehicles to be driven on numerous downhill ski trails, including areas with steep slopes.
- The driving school is responsible for the creation of new “driving trails/roads” in the vicinity of the Timberline Base Area, for which trees were cut.
- Areas of erosion and areas of standing water due to the driving school were evident in the Timberline Base Area’s driving trails/roads, as well as other areas on the downhill ski trails.
- Sediment flowing into Joiner Brook tributaries from the driving trails/roads was evident.
- Additional homeowners were concerned that Bolton Valley is not displaying responsibility, and questioned if the off-road driving school had been legally permitted/approved by the town, and/or by ACT 250.

The group discussed the viability of the resort in the summer months, and questioned if driving vehicles on slopes steeper than 15% or 20% was an optimal activity. Linda Baker noted that the PC would contact the Bolton ZA to follow up on the issues raised by Mr. Parrot with regard to the off-road driving school including; validity, inclusion in the master plan, permitting by ACT 250 and the town, and reparation for un-permitted land

development. Mr. Parrot noted that he would be following up as well with regard to Bolton Valley's ACT 250 permits and by attending the Conservation Committee's next meeting.

- *Table 2.3 Resort Residential – decrease side/rear setback distances to 15 feet? For residential only?*

Discussion: Yes, decrease the side and rear setbacks to 15' (fifteen feet) for all uses, not just residential.

- *Table 2.4 Rural Residential – decrease setback requirements for residential uses.*

Discussion: The group noted the difference between the two districts and whether it would be less appropriate to reduce the setbacks within this district. A consensus was reached that determining what the pre-existing standards are (i.e. what setback do garages have now?) would be helpful in rendering a decision. Again, discuss with the ZA the possibility that he compile the information in the spring and then review.

- *Table 2.8 Flood Hazard – update flood hazard district references/requirements.*

Discussion: Update using state language. Amy to check with Sharon on specifics of this state change.

- *Add Ag Overlay district? West Bolton Village District?*

Discussion: The group noted that these two issues received much discussion previously; general consensus at that time was a no to adding these two new districts. Further discussion maintained that adding a West Bolton Village District was not a viable option, especially in the event that the golf course was sold for development. However, the group reached the consensus that further review of the Ag Overlay district was needed, especially the review of current maps showing prime agricultural soils in all of Bolton. It was noted that removing all possibility for any options of self sustainability; the lands to be farmed again, may not serve Bolton/VT well in future. Amy will procure current Bolton agricultural soil maps.

Agenda Item #2 – Complete CCRPC 2008 Municipal Needs Survey

The group completed the survey and noted that little assistance would be needed from CCRPC in the next fiscal year unless Bolton Valley submits a master plan and the ad hoc committee reconvenes and moves forward on making changes to the BLUDR. In that event, assistance with maps, GIS, build out analysis, and bylaw amendments might be requested.

Agenda Item #3 – Minutes December 12, 2007 Meeting

Steve Barner made a motion to accept the minutes of December 12, 2007. Rodney Pingree seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion carried.

Agenda Item #4 - Other communications/mail

There was none.

Agenda Item #5 ~ Any other business

Park and Ride

Jen Andrews noted that she would again be following up with the Select Board regarding the potential park and ride to be located at what was the staging area for the I89 bridge repair project (on the north side of RT. 2 before the I89 underpass). The group noted that it would be globally correct for the town to encourage carpooling by providing a park and ride in Bolton.

Holbrook Parcel

The group briefly discussed the upcoming informational meeting to be held on 2/4/08 by the Select Board regarding the sale of the Sara Holbrook parcel, and drafted an official response. Discussion included questions which Amy will forward to Deb for the Select Board, noting that the PC would greatly appreciate it if the Select Board could be prepared to provide the answers to the questions during the informational meeting. The questions are as follows;

1. What specific language was used in the original deed/gifting to the town, and does it include any reference/specifics as to how the parcel is to be used?
2. What would the assessed value of the parcel be?
3. What would the yearly taxes on the parcel be?

Linda Baker noted that it would be helpful for the informational meeting to start with a presentation regarding the proposed use/sale which would include addressing issues such as parking, and receiving legal access (to cross the tracks) from the railroad.

The Planning Commission's official response is as follows:

"The Bolton Planning Commission would like to take this opportunity to note that the sale of the Sarah Holbrook parcel to the Conservation Cycle Club of Vermont, LLC may not be in accordance with the Bolton Town Plan.

Under Section 1, Purpose and Goals, page 5, the Bolton Town Plan states that:

'The Town's goals for community development shall be to:

- a. Work to ensure the existence of public access to the area along the Winooski River corridor. Much of Bolton's livelihood is attributed to recreation and this theme should be expanded to include the area along the River. In 1992, a canoe access was established on the south side of the river, and in 1998 the Town acquired a 16 acre parcel on the north bank which could be developed into a park or walking path. The presence of a rail road which runs through this parcel creates a safety concern and needs to be addressed and resolved in order for any recreational developments to occur. Overall, this type of recreational development should be continued. A park could be sited along the river front, which could include playing fields, walking and biking trails, fishing & boating access."

Public Comment

Jen Andrews asked that the PC agendas reflect an opportunity for public comment at the start of each meeting.

Next Scheduled Meeting

The next meeting of the PC will be held on Monday, March 10, 2008, 6 – 8 p.m. at the Town Office.

Agenda Item #6 – Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Amy Grover
Clerk, Planning Commission

These minutes are unofficial until accepted.

These minutes were read and accepted by the Planning Commission on

_____, 2008

Linda Baker, Chair