

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

**Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

November 3, 2008  
6 – 8 p.m.  
Bolton Town Office

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

Planning Commission members absent: Jim Bralich

Also present: Larry Williams (7 p.m.)

Clerk: Amy Grover

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**Agenda**

1. Public Comment
2. Review of Park and Ride information
3. Review of potential amendments to the Bolton Land Use and Development Regulations
4. Minutes ~ October 6, 2008
5. Other communications/mail
6. Any other business
7. Adjournment

**Call to Order**

Linda Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

**Agenda Item #1 ~ Public Comment**

Linda Baker opened the floor to public comment. There was none.

**Agenda Item #2 Review of Park and Ride Information**

Amy noted that she was still waiting for information regarding site distance on the state owned parcel (previously used as I89 bridge repair staging) from VTrans. The group noted that sharing information with the Select Board and the planned site visit would be postponed until it was determined if there were any treatment options for site distance improvement. The currently compiled Park and Ride Facility information is as follows:

**Municipal Park-and-Ride Grant Program Information**

- 2009 program funded with \$250,000
- Application ~ simple 1 page form.
- Capital budget not required for application, matching funds not required.
- Requirements:
  1. Lot must be near a state designated route.
  2. Lot must provide spaces for minimum of 10 vehicles.
  3. Lot must be available for use year round.

4. Land for lot must be state or municipality owned.
  5. Lot will be owned and maintained by municipality.
  6. Park-and-Ride signage for the public to know there is a facility there.
- Optional ~ adding amenities (lighting, landscaping, shelters, benches, bike racks etc.) is entirely up to the town.
  - Grant funding may be used for: grading, gravel, signs, lighting, asphalt, engineering, striping, drainage, or “other.”
  - Grant funding may not be used to purchase or lease land.
  - 27 communities have successfully received funding in the last 4 years.

Town	Spaces
Bridport	20 - 30
Braintree	10 - 20
Brandon	20 - 30
Brattleboro	20 - 30
Cornwall	10 - 20
Dummerston	20 - 30
Essex Town	10 - 20
Fair Haven	30+
Glover	10
Hartford	30+
Highgate	20 - 30
Hinesburg	20 - 30
Huntington	10 - 20
Hyde Park	20 - 30
Leicester	10 - 20
Ludlow	10 - 20
Lyndon	10 - 20
Mendon	10 - 20
New Haven	20 - 30
Orange	20 - 30
Plainfield	10 - 20
Roxbury	10
Strafford	30+
Swanton Village	30+
Wallingford	10 - 20
Warren	10 - 20
Whitingham	20 - 30

Number of Lots	Number of spaces	Percentage of total
2	10	7%
11	10 - 20	41%
10	20 - 30	37%
4	30 +	15%

**Local Review Requirements**

- Conditional use in the Village District.
- Conditional use review by DRB required.
- Must meet access and minimum parking standards, spaces 9’ x 18’.

**State Review Requirements**

- VTRans approval for access to/from Route 2.

**Link Express Bus**

- The Montpelier Link Express (Montpelier/Burlington route) travels along I89 and only exits onto Route 2 to access the Richmond Park and Ride.
- CCTA and GMTA have “to balance request for additional stops with our desire to keep the route’s running time attractive to commuters.”
- Requests for additional stops in Waterbury and Williston have been denied.
- It is highly unlikely that the Link Express would ever be sent on Route 2 to serve a Bolton park and ride.

- “It is possible that another route might be created to serve Route 2 at some point in the future and I believe it would be in the interest of Bolton to develop any park and ride in very close proximity to Route 2.” (Meredith Birkett, Senior Transit Planner, CCTA)

#### **Options to Site a Park and Ride Facility**

- Consider using an existing town-owned lot, if space allows (or if one could be expanded); Bolton’s options include the town office, town garage, fire station, and Smilie School.
- Consider the lease or purchase of private land within the Route 2 corridor. Purchase would probably require a subdivision; DRB review and approval.
- 89 Bridge staging area ~ Wayne Davis, VTrans stated that he knew the site and believes “it is a very good site for a park and ride facility.” However, while site distance to the north (west) seems to be ok, “site distance to the south (east) is an issue. This issue is currently under review by the Agency, as there may be some treatment methods available for consideration.”
- State owned land between the I89/Rt 2 corridors near the I89 southbound emergency gate.

#### **Other Town’s Park and Ride Experiences**

**Huntington**, information from Ed Wildman, Town Administrator:

1. Lot is part of their library parking lot (which already gets plowed), so there hasn’t really been any increased maintenance costs or additional employees needed.
2. No safety or vandalism issues at this time.
3. During development there were concerns from neighbors about the proposed lighting, but the town worked with them to reach a mutually beneficial agreement. Plans for shrubbery to be installed to provide additional screening for privacy and from light.
4. Local resident Wally Jenkins (434-4424) was instrumental in creation of the lot and could provide more information.

**Hinesburg**, information from Rocky Martin Director of Buildings and Facilities:

1. “Lot is adjacent to a soccer field on the driveway into Town Hall so maintenance/safety/lighting issues might be different if it was in a more remote location. It has been an official Park and Ride for one year, 19 spaces with one van handicap accessible.
2. Maintenance: So far not much additional cost. Snow plowing-I do the parking lot and driveway with a pick up so it is easier to plow very early when no cars start showing up-takes about a half hour longer on average. It is next to a soccer field; we do not have trash cans so folks usually pick up after themselves pretty well, I occasionally pick up some trash. Signs are all new so won’t have to replace for a long while. Lot is paved and line striped so we will have to do that next year-about \$150-and looks like it will last for 2 years.
3. Safety/Vandalism: No major problems as of yet, lot is in the village area and there are 2 houses close by. Only vandalism was a car driven through new flower/shrub bed which divides park and ride and rest of town hall parking. There was one car that was left there after Police arrested a driver for an outstanding warrant-no license kind of thing but that was just for a few days.
4. Neighbor concerns: When designed and permitted, one neighbor was very concerned about lighting (we added 3 new solar powered street lights) as his bedroom faced out towards the lot. We used direct cutoff down lighting and he later said he doesn’t notice it all. As Town hall is used extensively for meetings etc at night there were no concerns about car lights. Both neighbors were concerned about privacy so we installed a cedar hedge close to the property line. This hedge is

only 5 feet tall now but should grow quickly to fill in and provide screening. I'd say the lighting is probably the biggest thing Bolton could do to promote safety etc because it is so dark early morning and early afternoon in winter. Our lights come on 2 hours before daylight then again at dusk and are on until 11:00 at night and work quite well.

I'd be happy to give a little tour and provide some cost figures if the Bolton (or anyone else) folks want."

**Essex**, information from Dennis Lutz, Town Engineer and Public Works Director:

1) "I have not found the maintenance to be a particularly difficult issue. However, I also have a larger work force to deal with problems. I have two temporary employees during the summer – one for cutting grass and other chores and one for landscaping. They already take care of a lot of areas so one more is not a problem. There are some added winter plowing issues because any added areas mean more work. Overall, I do not believe any other employees would be needed – using some of the summer temp help – college kids, laborers is probably a cheap way to keep the area up.

2) No safety or vandalism problems whatsoever. We have had some problems off and on with an adjacent apartment building leaving vehicles there or putting them there with a for sale sign on them. We either talk to them directly or if it goes on, we get the police involved by tracking down the owners and letting them do the enforcement. It hasn't been a big issue but we have had 2 or 3 of these events over the past 3 years.

3) One neighbor expressed a concern after the lights went up. We installed some deflectors and the problem went away. Privacy was never an issue.

4) Overall, it has been very positive. It is a very public location on the Town Green and across from the library and next to my office. Maybe these are reasons why we haven't had any significant issues."

**Agenda Item #4~ Review (continued) of possible amendments to the Bolton Land Use and Development Regulations**

The group continued the review of the list of potential changes/updates to the BLUDRs, looking specifically at the current definition of an "Alpine Ski Facility." The PC had invited Larry Williams, Bolton Valley, to provide input on the current definition and to provide thoughts on potential uses that might positively impact the resort's year round viability.

The group reviewed the current definition in the BLUDRs, and 2 other town's definitions as follows;

**Bolton:**

**Alpine Ski Facility:** An area and a facility developed for downhill skiing, with trails and lifts, which may also include associated ticketing, parking, ski equipment sales and rentals, ski instruction, safety, patrol, snowmaking and maintenance facilities, and warming hut facilities to be accessed primarily by ski trails or service roads. Other facilities, such as commercial lodging, indoor recreation, cultural and restaurant facilities, which may support year-round use, may be allowed in association with an alpine ski facility subject to review as a mixed use (see Section 4.14) or a planned unit development (Article VIII).

**Fayston:**

**Ski Area Operation:** Those activities inherent to routine operation and maintenance of a commercial alpine or Nordic ski area to include ski trails, ski lifts, terminal buildings, warming huts, maintenance

facilities, snowmaking installations, snack bars, restaurants, base lodges, parking area, ski shop, nursery and any other operations necessitated by normal commercial competition with other ski areas (see Limited Ski Area Operation).

**Ski Lift:** Facility for the transport of people at a ski area, including tows, chair lifts, gondolas, cable cars and similar facilities.

**Warren:**

**Ski Facility/Service:** Any facility or service that is incidental and subordinate to the use and operation of ski lifts, including but not limited to ticket sales, ski rentals and sales, ski instruction, maintenance and administrative facilities, snowmaking equipment and structures, and eating facilities which are located on the same lot as the primary use and are clearly related to the primary use. This definition specifically excludes lodging facilities (e.g. hotels and inns) and residential use, which are defined separately for the purposes of these regulations.

Larry Williams noted that in the big picture, the BLUDRs were complex, time consuming and costly to work with. He added that Bolton Valley does need to have year round use, and will need to have some amount of development to create an enterprise that is sustainable. Larry added that the “longstanding bugaboo” was the conditional use vs. a permitted use for the ski area. Linda Baker noted that the conditional use allows for a checks and balance system to be in place for the town.

Larry stated that he understood that the town needs to have a better understanding of the Master Plan. Larry noted that the current Master Plan was primarily developed for ACT 250, that he recognizes that the plan is pretty generic, and that Bolton Valley is working on a more detailed Master Plan. He added that Pioneer Environmental had been hired to do a natural resource assessment on the property identified for development, and with that identification of natural resource assets and issues, a more detailed Master Plan could be created. Larry stated at that point, Bolton Valley would come back to the town to continue the process of approval and identification of what areas of the plan still need more attention. Larry noted that the Master Plan would not bring development down to building footprint detail.

Larry shared his thoughts on potential uses and improvements at Bolton Valley:

- 4 x 4 Center, summer and winter use
- Mountain biking, summer use
- Tubing park, winter use
- Snowmaking expansion ~ more storage/ponds
- A “Stash” Park ~ a natural terrain snowboard park
- Glades trails
- Halfpipe ~ excavated vs. built with manmade snow
- Tent or gazebo to allow for multiple events (in addition to The Ponds)
- Trail improvements
- New lifts ~ i.e. a “Magic Carpet “ lift in the beginner area
- New trails
- Alpine slide or alpine coaster, summer use
- Zip line or zip tour, summer use
- Ropes course, summer use

- Ice climbing
- Rock climbing
- Additional parking

Larry stated that Bolton Valley would be holding a neighborhood meeting in December to discuss the development of a wilderness retreat – noting that could include houses; rentals and sales. He stated that the PC was more than welcome to attend or that he would be happy to provide the presentation to the town as well.

Larry added that Bolton Valley was also pursuing a 250K wind energy grant, with the potential to site 30 meter towers. The group briefly discussed the positive attributes of wind energy and the provision for that made under the BLUDRs.

The group briefly discussed a park and ride facility with respect to Bolton Valley's needs, and the current standing of the state parcel (lacking site distance).

**Agenda Item #5 – Minutes October 6, 2008 Meeting**

Jen Andrews made a motion to accept the minutes of October 6, 2008. Rodney Pingree seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion carried.

**Agenda Item #6 - Other communications/mail**

The group reviewed the email request from Leslie Pelch, Bolton's CCRPC Commissioner to draft a letter of support for CCRPC in light of comments that were misquoted and/or taken out of context regarding CCRPC by a Bolton official. The group agreed to send a letter directly to the CCRPC executive director. Linda and Amy will draft the letter.

Amy noted that a letter of interest regarding the upcoming PC vacancy had been received from Erin Perkins. Erin was unable to make the November meeting to meet/interview with the PC as she was away on vacation. Amy will contact Erin to schedule an interview at the December meeting.

Amy noted that the annual report is due 12/4/08 and took input on information the PC would like to see reflected in this year's report.

**Agenda Item #7 ~ Any other business**

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

**Agenda Item #8 – Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Amy Grover  
Clerk, Planning Commission

*These minutes are unofficial until accepted.*

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes  
November 3, 2008

These minutes were read and accepted by the Planning Commission on

December 8 , 2008

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Baker". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Linda Baker, Chair