

Town of Bolton  
Planning Commission Minutes  
January 21, 2020

Board Members Present: Kaelyn Modrak, Deb Shelby, Steve Barner, Evan DesLauriers

Planning and Zoning Administrator: Larry Lewack

Guests: 14 public attending public hearing portion

Jeff Tricou (for Paul Growald), Joss Besse, Michael McKeown, Michael Laramie,  
Amy Zoldowski, Jonathan Slomba, Katarina Lisaius, Joshua Coffee, Rob Mullen,  
Jen Lyford, Mike O'Malley, Chad Farrell, Amy Ludwin, Michael Hunter

(7:00) Chad Farrell, Encore Renewable Energy

Clerk: Paula Gervia

**1. Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Deb at 6:03 pm.**

**2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda**

None.

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes**

Deb had questions with the last meeting minutes.

- Was there a review of the district map? Were all changes and amendments discussed? Not to that degree.
- Also review of timelines? When did letters go out to the owners? Dated the 6th of January.
- Are the minutes acceptable from other PC members' recollection? Yes.

Steve made the motion to approve the minutes of 12-9-19, Kaelyn seconded, motion was approved (2-0, 1 abstention).

**5. General Business**

- (6:00) Public Hearing: Proposed Bolton Land Use and Developmental Regulations (BLUDRs) and Municipal Plan Amendments

**Public Hearing: Proposed Bolton Land Use and Developmental Regulations (BLUDRs) and Municipal Plan Amendments**

**Public meeting called to order by Deb at 6:09 pm.**

Planning Commission members introduced themselves.

Larry welcomed everyone and explained the purpose of the meeting - accepting comments and questions about changes to municipal plan and BLUDRs.

Brief overview by Larry:

- Two sections of town plan to change.
- Proposed energy plan section. To ramp up what the town is doing to increase conservation of energy and proposed language to state goals around renewable energy development in town.
- Changes to zoning district map. Started with current map and looked at proposed changes. First change is a proposal to extend the boundaries of the village district up about 600 feet on Bolton Valley Road. Many pre-existing properties are set up with restrictions. This rezoning helps with additions or renovations with properties.
- Second change to zoning district map for better protection of natural resources in our town. Recommendations from Agency of Natural Resources, based on tracked wildlife, to protect, preserve and defend those blocks from future development. Much of the town is zoned forest or conservation districts. When reviewing properties, there were a few properties that would need changes to help lock in the preservations. Most of properties suggested were already conserved or they were deemed undevelopable due to access or terrain. State purchased a lot of land and state conserved that land as well.
- Also changes related to our development ordinances including many areas such as on-farm accessory dwellings, accessory buildings, etc. Many of the ordinances were driven by state laws.

Questions/comments from public:

- To learn about Bolton Valley section <sup>100000</sup> turning into village zoning area. Overall supportive to this.
- Member of Conservation Commission interested in hearing about the changes.
- Happy with steps to improve wildlife corridors, looking at changes on map and okay with it.
- Wants Planning Commission member to come to Conservation Commission meeting to review changes in more detail.
  - Can send a representative to next meeting.
- Clarification point by PC member - Prior to what PC was proposing, forest and conservation areas were based on elevation. Now changing that to be based on property lines as needed.

- Concern about changes from Rural 1/Rural 2 to conservation land. Already has conserved land with state. Forest legacy land with conservation easement. Questions with town land conservation. Different levels of scrutiny with state vs. town. How can you change my land when I own it - I am against this.
- Zoning line does not follow property line exactly in one area. Are there other situations in town that are similar to that?
  - There may be.
- Energy plan question - for the town to have a stand when a business comes for renewable energy, they (town) have to have energy plan approved by regional planning commission.
- Just hear because curious of changes in town.
- Conversion from Rural 1/Rural 2 to conservation - this is making my house nonconforming now. It already has nature conservation easement on it and current use with state.
  - Clarification of land - thought this was different property so this may be a non-issue.
- From Bolton Valley Rural 1 to conservation. Are there property tax implications?
  - In this case - no.
- Are/were there current development plans that prompted this rezone?
  - Yes - a family dwelling.
- Any big commercial plans?
  - No.
- From Bolton Valley area - we think it is a good proposal.
- What is the process for those not wanting to be a part of the changes?
  - This public hearing is designed for feedback and pro/cons. Planning Commission takes feedback, will review it from their perspective and changes with bylaws, tweak as needed and then send final version to SelectBoard. SelectBoard then holds at least one public hearing for that version. They (SelectBoard) takes that feedback, makes any further changes as needed and then moves to vote/adopt any changes. SelectBoard has autonomy to make final changes.
- Clarification by Planning Commission - We are trying to get owners' voices, desire of landowners in addition to town proposals.
- Questions on how to clarify boundary lines with zoning districts.
- Can a new definition be created to align with some unique properties?
  - There are overlay maps with certain restrictions. Some towns have conservation overlay district. An idea to explore. Want maps to be aligned and self-explanatory.
- Are Potholes changing to village district also?

- Yes - most of their land is river corridor anyway.
- Clarification from Planning Commission - the link for the town maps is on town website if anyone wants to look more closely at these proposed changes online.

No more comments or clarifications.

**Deb made the motion to adjourn public hearing portion of meeting at 7:02, Kaelyn seconded and motion passed (4-0).**

- Next steps discussed by Planning Commission:
  - Need to review all feedback received.
  - Sharon Murray sent email with feedback about proposed amendments as was unable to attend public hearing. This needs to be reviewed.
  - Additional feedback from CCRPC and Town Attorney to be reviewed.
  - Question about modification to follow property lines instead of elevation lines? Not at this time. Two property changes on maps to address landowner feedback. Deb will contact CCRPC to do this.
  
- Bolton Energy Committee Presentation
  - Solar Project Endorsement Letter
  - Presentation from Chad Farrell. Looking at options for renewable energy for Bolton Valley.
  - Only allowed to use preferred sites for 500kw net-metered solar array projects.
  - Proposal for placement along Route 2 at old driving range.
  - This does still account for interchange if allowed in the future.
  - Process includes work with Energy Committee, PC, SelectBoard, CCRPC. Then move to state level permitting. Energy committee has written a letter of support.
  - Benefits include: property tax revenue, helps meet town energy goals, enables institutional company (Bolton Valley Resort) to continue to grow their business locally. This energy is only for Bolton Valley Resort.
  - Deb suggested Larry draft a letter of support from Planning Commission in support of project. Members of PC are supportive, Evan abstained.
  
- Municipal Grant
  - Need to create feedback notes about process to PlaceSense.
  - Larry gave quick update on stakeholders' meetings.
  - Next steps - PlaceSense will write up insights from meetings. First draft with plan due early February with anticipated public meetings in March.

- Review UPWP request from CCRPC
  - Application was due last Friday and Larry did submit request to CCRPC. He handed out for PC members to review for their information.

**6. Other Business**

- Next board meeting scheduled: February 18, 2020
- Items for next agenda: BLUDRs amendments/feedback from public, Municipal Grant, recruitment of new members
- Other communications: None

**7. Adjournment**

Deb made the motion "to close the meeting", Kaelyn seconded, no further discussion, all in favor and motion passed (4-0) at 8:02 pm.

Attest: Paula Gervia, Clerk Minutes are unofficial until approved.

These minutes were read and accepted by a quorum of the Planning Commission on:

2-24-2020

  
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For the Planning Commission