

**TOWN OF SHELBURNE  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
January 25, 2024**

**\*Hybrid meeting.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steve Kendall (Chair); Marla Keene, Jeff Hodgson, Stephen Selin, Shawn Sweeney, Tom Karlhuber. (Jean Sirois was absent.)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Aaron DeNamur, Planning Director; Shayne Geiger, Stormwater Coordinator.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Robin Jeffers, Anne Bentley, Don Porter, Meagan Buckley, Christine Wilder, Alec Webb, Megan Camp, Rowland Davis, Don Rendall, Gail Albert, David Webster, Lee Suskin, Sarah Ray, Sean Macfaden, Mark Pennington, Nicky Stevens, Media Factory.

**AGENDA:**

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes (1/11/24)
4. Disclosures/Potential Conflicts of Interest
5. Open to the Public
6. Listening Session: Bylaw Rewrite
7. Joint Meeting with Shelburne Natural Resources & Conservation Commission (SNRCC)
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair, Steve Kendall, called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** by Stephen Selin, **SECOND** by Jeff Hodgson, to approve the agenda.

**VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*January 11, 2024*

**MOTION** by Marla Keene, **SECOND** by Shawn Sweeney, to approve the minutes of 1/11/24 as presented. **VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.**

**4. DISCLOSURES/POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

None.

**5. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Rowland Davis, resident, asked about holding additional “listening sessions” on the bylaws. Steve Kendall confirmed there will be more sessions scheduled.

**6. LISTENING SESSION: Bylaw Rewrite***COMMENTS:*

- Members of the Affordable Housing Task Force spoke in support of bylaw amendments allowing/promoting affordable housing and increasing opportunities for people to build housing that is needed.
- Suggestions from the Affordable Housing Task Force included (list will be submitted to the Planning Office):
  - Having no primary residence occupancy requirements for accessory dwelling units to allow for more affordable housing being available.
  - Tax incentives for accessory units rented year-round to households below median income.
  - Inclusionary zoning incentives and offsets and public policies to enforce inclusionary zoning.
  - Restructuring of the town's impact fees to garner resources for a town trust fund applied to affordable housing.
  - Workforce housing allowed on all farms of 15 or more acres.
  - Interim zoning while incentives are put in place.
  - Support of Champlain Housing Trust and other entities that build affordable housing.
- Rewrite of bylaws and zoning must be done to allow affordable housing in Shelburne and to protect the character of the town.
- There is support for affordable housing and land conservation and allowing affordable housing in areas other than the Route 7 corridor.
- The Planning Commission needs to look at and consider different concepts for development.
- Increase in affordable housing in town is needed so people who work in Shelburne can afford to live there, and there needs to be clarity, conciseness, and affordability for developers.
- Farms on Route 116 need to be included in the same new zoning district being discussed for Shelburne Farms.
- Identify the limits to growth (wastewater capacity and such) and concentrate opportunity for growth in the sewer service area and consider the affordability factor.
- Keep in mind economic development in the community.
- There are linkages between zoning and what is occurring in the community.
- Promote Shelburne to the kinds of businesses the town wants to attract; do outreach, offer incentives, have good, thoughtful zoning in place.
- Rewrite of the bylaws to get affordable housing is the priority.
- Creative approaches are needed (density, smaller units, convert single family dwellings to multi-family) because land prices are high.
- Community and economic development are under the umbrella of the bylaw rewrite.

- The rewrite of Article 6 will address many of the affordable housing issues.
- Zoning rewrite should be in support of creative redevelopment and choosing businesses the town wants.
- Businesses should be asked to help with redevelopment.
- The rewrite should simplify the bylaws, not create more districts than existing, and accommodate commercial entities.
- Do not bend the zoning bylaws to address just affordable housing.
- Investigate what happened with the planned development of the Meach Cove property.
- The town cannot develop to the level wanted with keeping all the open space.

#### **7. JOINT MEETING: Planning Commission and Shelburne Natural Resources & Conservation Commission (SNRCC)**

There was discussion of the following:

- Stronger regulations are needed for the protection of natural resources.
- There has been push back on the change from five acres to 10 acres relative to restriction on developing land.
- What should happen on certain land should be ranked.
- SNRCC uses state maps, maps developed by consultants (Arrowwood, for example), and by SNRCC to prioritize land.
- SNRCC maps identify forest blocks so the impact of development can be minimized
- Language in the bylaws is needed to protect areas by minimizing the impacts of development.
- Significant features and connectivity to create a mass instead of ‘pockets’ should be encouraged with development of a parcel.
- Rewrite of Article 6 of the bylaws will address what is in the town plan and many of the issues being discussed by SNRCC.
- Flexibility is needed in the conservation design process in working with developers and the town’s needs.
- Development should be done in creative ways to protect diversity of species and habitat.
- Open space vistas distinguish Shelburne from surrounding towns and these vistas should be protected; the town should look at financing to acquire the vistas.
- Article 6 of the bylaws will be a prescribed set of regulations to protect resources the town aspires to protect, but must also respect what the landowners want to do with their land.
- The regulations are a tool and each situation should be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- A site walk by a neutral specialist, such as Arrowwood, should be done on property to be developed to assess what should be developed and what is wanted to be protected.

- The bylaws should have language reminding the DRB that a technical review can be requested; a developer can accept the requirement of minimizing impact of development on a parcel or hire a consultant to confirm the impact is minimal.
- Density bonus could be offered if affordable housing is being built or if 60% of the land is being conserved.
- The current regulations have led to fragmentation of large lots that have resources the town would like to protect.
- The impact of Act 47 density of rural areas needs to be known.

## 8. OTHER BUSINESS

### *Meeting Schedule*

February 8, 2024 – Continued review of the bylaw rewrite

January 27 & 31, February 1 & 3, 2024 – Neighborhood meetings on bylaw rewrite

### *Stormwater Coordinator*

Shayne Geiger, Shelburne's Stormwater Coordinator, was introduced.

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION by Steven Selin, SECOND by Marla Keene, to adjourn the meeting.**

**VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 PM.

*RScy: MERiordan*