

**Shaftsbury Planning Commission
Shaftsbury Town Hall
Buck Hill Rd at 7:00 pm
Regular Meeting
January 8, 2012**

Members present: Chris Williams (Chair), Norm Gronning, William Pennebaker, David Spurr (Vice-Chair)

Members absent: Abigail Beck

Others present: Tyler Yandow (Zoning Administrator), Sandra Mangsen (Recording Clerk), Michael Batchner, Oliver Durand (Fire Warden), Michael Foley, Jim Henderson, Gerald Mattison (Emergency Management Director), JoAnn Race, Mitchell Race, Jeri Schoof

1. Call to order

Chris Williams called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm

2. Minutes of Dec 11, 2012

Motion. To approve the minutes of Dec 11, 2012, as corrected. Moved by Bill Pennebaker; seconded by Norm Gronning. Carried, 4-0-0.

3. Community wildfire protection plan

Jim Henderson and Michael Batchner of the Bennington County Regional Commission offered a power-point presentation on the subject of wildfire protection. They responded to questions from those in attendance. They are hoping to establish good cooperation and collaboration among the various agencies involved, from the local Fire Department to the National Forest Service. Gerry Mattison noted that travel corridors for use during emergencies should be identified.

4. Town plan revision -- timetable and strategy

At five-year intervals, the Town Plan is revised, a process begun by the Planning Commission. Chris Williams asked what has changed in the town in the last four years. Changes in local industry, the adoption of a regional energy plan, and the growth in the school-age population in Shaftsbury were among the items mentioned.

Chris then asked members to think about how the Town Plan should be revised to reflect the changes noted.

Other items mentioned included: the labeling of historic houses (noting that not all property owners wish their houses to be labeled); the development of more local food systems, and the positive effect of that on the feeling of community.

Chris asked the members to read the Town Plan before the next meeting, and to compare it to that of Rupert or Landgrove. He noted that the Planning Commission is on the Selectboard agenda for January 21.

5. Sign ordinance continued discussion

Bill Pennebaker asked whether those most interested in the sign ordinance knew about the meeting, since they did not attend. Chris responded that he had had communication with Art Whiman, and was aware the group from the Economic Development Committee would not be able to attend. He suggested discussion continue in any case.

Bill Pennebaker noted three issues that remain outstanding:

- a) illuminated signs
- b) signs for businesses permitted as conditional uses in VC districts, and
- c) regulation of food and beverage machines outside businesses.

Section 3.1.5 as it stands maintain the prohibition on internally illuminated signs. After some discussion, the issue remained unresolved and will be taken up again.

Section 3.4.4: The square footage of permitted signs needs to be determined. Twenty square feet total was suggested and met with general approval.

Section 3.9: Food and beverage machines. A definition of such machines as signs is needed if these are to be included within the sign ordinance; or the section could be removed entirely from the ordinance. This discussion will be continued.

6. Other business as required

Planning Commission members will meet with the Selectboard on January 21, in part to discuss the revision of the Town Plan.

The question of the size of the Planning Commission has been raised by interested residents. Members do not see a need to expand the Commission, whether on a temporary or a permanent basis, but they do want to have input from the public as they revise the Town Plan. The possibility of creating an advisory group was briefly explored.

Chris asked about the logistics of formulating the town plan. It is now in point form, but there is some desire to transform it into a narrative.

Various proposals need to be sent to the Selectboard for approval, and a public hearing will be needed beforehand. Issues include the proposed zoning map changes and the question of permitting multifamily housing in certain zones.

The regular business of the Planning Commission will be addressed at the meeting of Feb 12; that of Jan 22 will focus on the Town Plan.

7. Adjournment

Motion. To adjourn the meeting. Moved by David Spurr; seconded by Norm Gronning. Carried, 4-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Mangsen
(Recording Clerk)