



TOWN OF BERLIN, VERMONT

Washington County

Municipal Office Building
108 Shed Road
Berlin, Vermont
05602

Berlin Planning Commission
Regular Monthly Meetings - 2nd and 4th Wednesday
September 12, 2007
7:00 PM

Unapproved Minutes:

Members Present: Carl Parton, Chairperson; Nancy Tripp, Rob Young, and Mark Keffer.
Absent: John Hurley, Henry LaGue, and David Sanguinetti. Others Present: Patricia McDonald, Select Board Chair; Robert Wernecke, DRB Chair; and Jeff Schulz, Town Administrator.

Call Meeting to Order: - Carl called meeting to order at 7:07 PM

Public Comment: No public comment

Approval of Minutes: Nancy made a motion to approve the minutes of August 22nd with no changes. Mark seconded the motion. The motion was called by Carl, motion passed 4-0.

FEMA Flood Plain Maps:

Patricia McDonald and Robert Wernecke met with the Planning Commission to present an update on the results of the Washington County Flood Insurance Study (FIS). Also, Pat McDonald gave the Commission a copy of letter from Barre City, and the Town of Berlin to Secretary of the Agency of Transportation Neal Lunderville outlining their concerns with the results of the FIS. Pat included a response letter from Secretary Lunderville. Pat summarized the letters stating that FEMA representatives held a meeting in January of 2007, to review results of the FIS, and that the study includes revised hydrologic and hydraulic analyses study of Gunners Brook, Stevens Branch, and Winooski River. At the meeting, FEMA reviewed the process for both protests and appeals of the FIS. Pat noted that the meeting left many unanswered questions. Pat further noted that the FIS used different methodology from the previous study done over 25 years ago, and the results are a significant reduction in flood plain areas. The reduction in areas labeled as floodplain could be a benefit for new development; however, the Town needs to be confident that the results of the FIS are accurate to ensure that the public is getting the right information.

Robert Wernecke also pointed to a letter from Barry Cahoon, the Acting State NFIP Coordinator to FEMA that raises concerns about the FIS. Robert states that he is please to see Barry Cahoon's letter, and that the letter says that the State of Vermont will not stand behind the information in the FIS. Further, Robert noted that the Planning Commission should be aware of these potential new flood zoning standards, and whether they truly reflect the risks of developing in the floodplain. And, that Berlin should go on record with their concerns about the FIS.

Robert also noted that the City of Barre commissioned the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) to prepare map overlays comparing the current flood plain maps versus the data in the FIS. Robert recommended having the CVRPC prepare overlays for Berlin, and that the Town draft a letter to FEMA with its concerns about the FIS. Pat McDonald will contact Barre City about preparing a letter to FEMA. Jeff Schulz will contact CVRPC about the cost to prepare the overlays for Berlin.

Resignation: Carl Parton announced his resignation from the Planning Commission. Carl thanked the Commission for their hard work, and noted that he would be available to assist if the group had questions.

Future Meetings: The next Commission meeting will be September 26, 2007.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by Mark, Seconded by Nancy motion passed 4-0. Adjournment came at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Schulz, Town Administrator