

# Richmond Planning Commission

## Regular Meeting

August 15, 2012

### *Approved Minutes*

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**Members Present:** Gary Bressor (Chair), Lou Borie (Vice-Chair), Mark Fausel, Joe McHugh, Dan Renaud, Christy Witters

**Members Absent:** one vacancy

**Others Present:** Cathleen Gent (Town Planner/Staff to the DRB); Patty Palitto; Stephanie O'Leary; Bob Heiser (Vermont Land Trust)

**7:04 PM** Call to order by the Chair.

**Public Comment** – Palitto and O'Leary commented regarding their concerns about Section 2.15, Flood Hazard Overlay District, specifically about the requirement for permits for repairs in the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area. Patillo said it was ridiculous that a permit is needed for something that does not change the footprint of the structure. Witters explained that FEMA cares about the interior parts of structures as well as the exterior because it's important to track the value of a structure, for flood insurance purposes. At some point, floodproofing must be done to structures to protect them from flooding. Gent also explained that the current bylaws also require approvals for repairs, although currently the DRB must approve those repairs. Fausel added that the Planning Commission supports the concept of not charging for repairs for structures in the Special Flood Hazard Area in instances when other property owners in Richmond who do not live in the Special Flood Hazard Area don't have to get town approval for the same project. Bressor reviewed the public hearing schedule for proposed bylaws. Palitto and O'Leary left at this time.

#### **Natural Resources Assessment – Planning Update**

Gent briefly reviewed the status of the natural resources assessment, noting that there are three potential funding sources: CCRPC ECOS grant, Municipal Planning Grant, and the Richmond Conservation Reserve Fund. She indicated that Jon Kart will be meeting with the Selectboard next week, seeking conceptual approval to move forward with the grant applications.

#### **Richmond Conservation Reserve Fund – Andrews Farm Application**

Heiser joined the Planning Commission to discuss the Andrews Farm application, and the request for a letter of support from the Planning Commission to use the Richmond Conservation Reserve Fund for the project. Heiser said that the Conservation Commission has agreed to support the project. He then presented an overview of the project, noting that this is a high-priority project in which agricultural land will be conserved and a farm family will take over the operation of the farm, with farm worker housing. Heiser said that a total of \$10,000 is being requested from the Richmond Conservation Reserve Fund. A total of 184 acres will be conserved, along with a mature hemlock stand. Motion by Renaud, seconded by Borie, to submit a letter of support for the project for Richmond Conservation Reserve Fund funding. Voting: 6 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstentions. Gent will prepare a draft letter for Planning Commission review. Heiser left at this time.

**Mail** - Gent reviewed the mail.

#### **Meeting Minutes & Town Planner Report**

*Meeting Minutes: For July 5, 2012; July 10, 2012; July 12, 2012; August 2, 2012*

- July 5, 2012 - No amendments were offered. Motion by Borie, seconded by McHugh, to approve the minutes. Voting: in favor: 6; opposed: 0; abstentions: 0.

- July 10, 2012 – No amendments were offered. Motion by Borie, seconded by Fausel, to approve the minutes. Voting: in favor: 6; opposed: 0; abstentions: 0.

- July 12, 2012 – No Amendments were offered. Motion by Fausel, seconded by McHugh, to approve the minutes. Voting: in favor: 5 (Bressor, Borie, Fausel, McHugh, Renaud); opposed: 0; abstentions: 1 (Witters).

- August 2, 2012 – Two edits were offered. Motion by McHugh, seconded by Borie, to approve the minutes. Voting: in favor: 4 (Bressor, Borie, Fausel, McHugh); opposed: 0; abstentions: 2 (Renaud, Witters).

1 *Town Planner Report*

2 As a supplement to the August 9, 2012 report, Gent briefly discussed the most recent Economic  
3 Development Committee meeting.

4  
5 **Richmond Zoning & Subdivision Regulations Review/Adoption: Next Steps**

6 The Planning Commission discussed ways to educate Richmond residents about the fact that the  
7 proposed Section 2.15 (Flood Hazard Overlay District) is better than the current Section 6.8. The  
8 Commission also discussed whether to support the removal of the 100-foot buffer from the proposed  
9 bylaws, Section 2.15 and decided not to support that change. Fausel asked Gent to send the  
10 Commission the FEMA base model ordinance from the Department of Environmental Conservation.

11  
12 **Richmond Town Plan Update**

13 The Planning Commission discussed the steps for the town plan update and agreed that all the sections  
14 will need at least some revision. The Commission will focus its attention during the next meeting on the  
15 Natural Resources Section and will review the natural resources section from the Front Porch  
16 Community Planning and Design final report for the Municipal Planning Grant. The Commission agreed  
17 it would be best to meet with consultant Sharon Murray after the Commission has reviewed Murray's  
18 report, probably in October.

19  
20 **Adjournment**

21 Borie made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Witters. So voted. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

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23  
24 Respectfully submitted by Cathleen Gent, Town Planner/Staff to the DRB