

Strafford Planning Commission  
November 18, 2024

Present: Donald Graham, Chair; Greg Colling; Stuart Crocker; Chrissy Jamieson; Phoebe Mix; Michael Scanlan; Andrew Silovich; Martha Walke.

Guests: Brian Kovalick, TRORC; Bonnie Bergeron, DRB; Toni Pippi, Selectboard; John Echeverria.

Meeting called to order at 7:11PM.

1. Minutes from May, 2024, were moved (SC/??) to accept as written. Passed unanimously.

2. According to statute, the Planning Commission is to present a proposed capital budget to the Selectboard. The Strafford PC is prepared to do this but it is the Selectboard that has the grant to write a capital budget. According to Toni Pippi, the Strafford PC is not expected to present a capital budget. Brian Kovalick is preparing the budget. Statute enables the PC to present it but the Selectboard can do it with the PC's help.

The PC will not be involved in the writing of the capital budget. The budget will be reviewed by the PC, paying particular attention to items such as are in the Town Plan (energy, trails and paths, the Town Office, roads and bridges and any other pertinent items) and will make suggestions to the Selectboard. Brian Kovalick will present the final capital budget.

Motion made (SC/CJ) that the role of the Planning Commission concerning the capital budget will be to review it in only as it conforms to the Town Plan. Passed unanimously.

A reminder was made that the capital budget's objective is to keep a town's budget and spending steady but being always aware of "special events".

Question from John Echeverria whether the budget is concerned with big dollars or is it a set of priorities. Statute says that it is a set of priorities with estimated costs decided by the Selectboard.

3. In regard to our Town Plan, some Act 250 changes were reviewed by Brian Kovalick:

- A. Village center designations now have to be renewed.
- B. Land Use Review is now handled by a state board. Criteria areas for each town will be reviewed by regional commissions. Strafford is a 1B town and jurisdictions will be designated with help from TRORC. Regional plans will also change. At this point, we do not have to revise our Unified Bylaws.
- C. On Farm Business changes relate to the storage and sale of goods. No longer have to only sell 50% of own produce. No permit is needed for new structures for manufacturing if 50% of produce comes from the farm. Local permitting still in effect for agricultural tourism.
- D. Duplexes are now classified as single family homes. No spatial requirements but state permits needed where pertinent.
- E. Parking does not pertain to us as we have nothing in our Bylaws pertaining to parking.
- F. The DRB must hold a hearing within 120 days of application. There is no time limit in our Bylaw for site plans and conditional use.

G. An “interested person” who is not an abutter must be a representative of 20 people.

4. Donald Graham and Greg Colling’s terms on the Planning Commission are up in March, 2025. Donald will not be staying on the PC but Greg will accept a new term. The search for a new member will be undertaken.

Motion to adjourn (SC/MS). Meeting adjourned at 8:05???

Respectfully submitted,

Martha M. Walke, Secretary