

APPROVED

HUNTINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes June 27, 2016

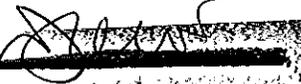


PRESENT: Everett Marshall, Terry Ryan, Joe Segale, Shayne Jaquith, Mark Smith

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Darlene Palola

MINUTES: Heidi Racht

RECEIVED 
DATE July 19, 2016

- 7 pm Public Comment
 - Minutes of May 9, 2016
 - Minutes of June 13, 2016
 - Mail
- 7:15 Work on regs updates
- 8:30 Member Business
- 8:35 Adjourn

The meeting began at 7:01 pm; chaired by Everett Marshall.

Public Comment: Darlene Palola explained that she was at the meeting as a member of the Friends of the Winooski River. She said that the Huntington River has been left out of the restoration project and is looking “to change that.” She said that she is looking for Huntington landowners who need vegetation for riverbank restoration. She is looking for a “typical” restoration project. She mentioned that there are new state regulations on farms that require a 25-foot buffer. Mark Smith asked about the Wetland Enhancement Program. Shayne Jaquith responded that this is administered through NRCS. Heidi Racht said she would be interested in a restoration consultation on a her property that borders Brush Brook.

Minutes of June 13, 2016: Terry Ryan moved to approve; second, Shayne Jaquith. Approved, with Mark Smith abstaining.

Minutes of May 9, 2016: Everett Marshall moved to approve; second, Shayne Jaquith. Approved unanimously.

Mail: No mail requiring action.

Flood Hazard Regulations:

Shayne Jaquith presented information to on Flood Hazard Regulations, explaining that the HPC needs to “understand why we are going through this exercise.” The National Floodplain Insurance Program is administered by FEMA.

Flood Regulations encompass three parts: Flood Insurance, Floodplain Development Regulations, Floodplain maps.

Property owners have to have insurance whether the town participates through zoning. The insurance costs are cheaper to the property owner, if the town participates.

NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program) protects against inundation. It is a 1% flood (1 occurrence in 100 years), but this happens more often than every 100 years. The program regulations do not recognize erosion.

River equalization moves water and material. Equilibrium moves some sediment. Aggradation: flow is overwhelmed by sediment loss. Incision is the erosion of banks. Stage 4 has gravel bars. With a flow event over two years, there is a 50% chance to change in flow, a channel changing flow. Incision is a down cut. In Stage 4 shows aggrading of high banks and down cuts the river. This has been historical slides and deforestation.

A factor that could contribute to this is the conversion of ag lands to impervious surface, such as pavement. More hard paving will lead to more Stage 4 sites. Vermont has 5000 river miles assessed and 75% are undergoing channel evolution.

The question is "How to mitigate hazards?"

River corridors – areas mapped where a river will meander over time to maintain slope.

Flow cells create spirals. Energy is moving through a medium and the prediction is the width, which is how the river needs to meander – tends to be six times the channel width. The valley wall defines it.

Incentives for Adoption

ERAF (Emergency Relief Assistance Fund) FEMA provides 75% and Vermont 17.5% if there are regs. If it is just NFIP, then there is just 12%.

There is a community grading system and a community rating system. Vermont has model flood hazard regulations. The state wants people to go with the more restrictive regs (November 2013). The new state regs allow structures that aren't primary residences.

Ryan commented that he wasn't confident that the state regs are better.

Marshall recommend no new residential development in the flood zone.

Ryan pointed out that the existing draft has now new structures. However, you can't condemn an entire village and need to work with the system. CI on page 5 prohibits residential development.

The Commission discussed the lands to which the regs apply include regulated flood areas – the river corridor, Special Flood Hazard Area, FEMA and Vermont Natural Resources, Base Flood Elevation and Floodway limits – areas right in 100 year flood area. Base should be under #2. Jaquith suggested putting this in verbatim as it might be hard to paraphrase.

The floodway is the width of the river; it can't include flood elevation. The Commission looked at the table. There are some changes including differences between permitted and conditional uses. Right now, residential structures are proposed to go to Conditional Use. Decision was made to change back

to prohibited. Non-residential structures must not be closer than the primary structure. If there is no primary structure, than a variance is needed.

The table summarizes the document. Ryan remarked that the proposed reg is a lot less restrictive, to a certain degree. Marshall suggested that the reg allow improvements to existing structures. He noted that the 2015 version of the flood regs is a less restrictive document, but it isn't on the web yet because the state wants the towns to use the stronger 2013 document.

Marshall asked if there was a way to plug this in as a document within a document. Ryan suggested an introductory paragraph and then say it is adopted in its entirety. Section 4.07 Flood Hazard Regs. Jaquith quested what they table would look like.

Ryan pointed out that there are differences in the definitions in the proposed zoning regs and the state's flood regs. He suggested adopting flood definitions over town definitions.

Actual definitions need to be stated. Jaquith pointed out that some maps have extensive studies; others are approximate. Huntington's are detailed.

Ryan speculated that eventually the state will adopt Huntington's detailed study. Jaquith responded that the town's map should be used as it is more detailed.

Marshall then said that people with existing houses in the flood zone would have more flexibility.

Smith said that permitted uses should foster improvement of existing structures and replacement of existing water/wastewater systems. Jaquith said that the storage of recreational vehicles should not be allowed.

In discussion about what would be an allowed improvement, there was a size and dollar figure. Ryan argued for square footage to compare not-substantial improvements or repairs.

Flood-proofing a structure is not an improvement.

Smith said he didn't want to restrict improvements. He said he tends to "back away from Conditional Use requirements" for improvements as a means of fostering flexibility.

Jaquith responded that there should be no further encroachment on the river and an increased footprint should not be allowed.

There was discussion on whether this should be an appendix.

Marshall talked about removing buffers in the regs as all streams are covered as they are embedded under the standards.

Ryan suggested taking this document and using it. Marshall followed up with a recommendation to remove 1A.

The Commission decided to set a date for the next hearing at its July 11 meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Racht will call CCRPC to see if the application for professional help with the regs has been funded.

Member Business: None.

Adjournment: The meeting ended at 9 pm

Draft Minutes on town website:

Unapproved Minutes to HPC: July 8, 2016

Minutes Approved: July 11, 2016

Minutes submitted to Town Clerk: July 18, 2016