

Vershire Planning Commission 4/14/21

In attendance: Bill Baylis-Chair, Gene Sobeck, Ken Bushey, Bob Perkins, Eleanor Zue, Sande French-Stockwell-Dev Admin., Debra Kingsbury-Sec'y Guests; Nicole White-Fogarty, Jake Palant and Kevin Geiger from TRORC.

Bill Baylis called the meeting to order at 7:02pm and Debra was recording the meeting. The Commission reviewed the agenda and reviewed and approved the minutes for 3/17/21.

Baylis welcomed Sobeck in his continuance on the Commission and reminded him to stop at the Town Office to be sworn in for his new term. The Commission congratulated Ken Bushey for being elected to serve on the Selectboard for three years and asked what his plans were for serving on the Commission. He stated that he would step down due to his new work load and would send his resignation to make it official. Baylis nominated Nicole White-Fogarty to fill Bushey remaining 2 years on the Commission and Perkins seconded. All were in favor and White-Fogarty agreed to accept the position after the Commission sends their recommendation to the Selectboard and they approve it.

Jake Palant and Kevin Geiger, TRORC planning specialists, came to present updated information on Flood Map regulations. They went on to share that Orange County doesn't have digitized flood maps. Geiger was asked how the maps could be updated and he replied that Orange County was not on the list to have them done at this time. He added that FEMA has high water study maps and if parcel is under 5 acre may be able to do a cross section survey cheaper than hiring an engineer to verify water levels for insurance. Property owners can't build in flood plain unless they can show the structures (both dwelling and outbuildings) are adequately anchored and have an engineer verify. Geiger went on to explain dwelling basements are considered to be the first level and must be above the flood level as does the septic /waste water system.

The Commission then asked about the "river corridor maps". Geiger replied that if the town adopts those then they have to interact in conjunction with ANR on those building requests. He recommended that there be 50 ft setbacks from wetlands and 35 ft from any perennial streams. It was noted that those requirements are noted in Vershire's current development ordinance. He added that if river edge is sliding, retaining rock may be added, but owner would have to seek approval from ANR. Baylis questions the "Irene Damage" in Bethel along Rte 107 and all the logs/debris ended up in the river and should it not have been harvested/removed. Geiger and Palant indicated that again was an ANR requirement. Zue asked in if ash trees, with the EAB infestation concern, should be cut before the damage occurs so that the root structure can remain in place to stabilize the riparian banking. It was noted that the "state" controls anything below the top of the stream and perhaps a question for Pat Ross at the State. Geiger explained that property owners finding their structures in flood plain areas and having increased insurance premiums due to that aspect can obtain an "elevation certificate" to verify the flood plain level that affects the insurance rate. He added that in some cases property owners have been advised to fill their basements with gravel so that the basement is no longer considered the first floor. Geiger noted that Vershire's FEMA map was less than adequate as it was for most of Orange County. He added that the state map for AOT

was superior. Baylis thanked Jake and Kevin for sharing the flood plain impact information.

Old Business: Sande updated the Commission on the T-Mobile application to update their equipment at their current site off Rte 113. She shared that they were continuing the use of the existing tower and that they had notified the Public Service Board as well.

Meeting adjourned at 8:29pm.