

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT 2011

The Planning Commission's primary mission is to review and update the Zoning Bylaws and the Town Plan on an ongoing basis to insure that they are kept current and in conformity with the State of Vermont rules and regulations. This Commission is also tasked with making recommendations for changes which are then passed on to the Town Board of Select People for their review and future enactment. It is through this process that the Warren Planning Commission guides and protects the vision of future development and community life in Warren.

The Commission started 2011 with the culmination of the updated Town Plan which the Commission had begun in 2010. The Warren Select Board readopted the plan with the updates and changes on April 26th and the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission gave their approval on September 13th. At the start of the year the Commission Members compiled a list of those items within the Warren Land Use and Development Regulations [WLUDR] which they had previously discussed either modifying or completely changing. Each member prioritized their list along with a plan to address the topics. The consensus was to move forward on incorporating some of the suggestions made by SmartGrowth VT in 2009 as well as some of their own specifically as it related to Warren Village. Those proposals which were studied, reviewed and publically heard over a two year period include the relocation of the boundaries of the Warren Village Historic Residential District and the creation of the Warren Village Mixed Use District within it. The proposals have been forwarded to the Select Board who will have their second and final hearing in January of 2012.

The Select Board asked the Planning Commission for both their short and long term recommendations for the Ruby Blair House. The Planning Commission referred to the Municipal Facilities Master Plan in the Town Plan which calls for the Ruby Blair house to be demolished in order to make way for a town green. Additionally, the PC did do some initial research on the costs involved should the house be taken down. The Historical Society also presented their plan to the Planning Commission for renovating the Blair Barn for which the town has received a grant. Again, the PC referred to the Municipal Facilities Master Plan in the Town Plan asking only that the footprint of the structure be aligned with the existing property lines and be more rectilinear with the other municipal owned buildings.

The River Management Program under the auspices of the VT Agency of Natural Resources has proposed the creation of a Fluvial Erosion Hazard Area and the Planning Commission discussed the subject several times during the year. With other priorities completed and in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene, this topic has now reached the top of the list for 2012. Also on the list is the search for a solution for an aging Town Garage facility. An ongoing effort has been taking place for the merger of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and the Central Vermont Economic Development Commission. The PC has requested of the Select Board that they ask for further study and information from the consolidation committee before a final decision is made.

At the beginning of the year, long time member John Goss submitted his resignation due to family obligations. The Commission was pleased to find and recommend for appointment by the Select Board, Randy Graves, another long time local resident who brings historical knowledge and insight to the discussions on the Planning Commission.

Current copies of the Warren Town Plan and the Warren Land Use and Development Regulations are available at the Town offices or on Warren's web site at <http://www.warrenvt.org/>. Planning Commission meeting agendas and minutes are also available at this site. The Planning Commission meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday of the month at the Municipal Building.

Planning Commission

Mike Ketchel, Chairman

Lisa Miserendino

Don LaHaye

Jim Sanford

Craig Klofach, Vice Chairman

Randy Graves

Dan Raddock