

**The Town of Warren
Planning Commission
Minutes of Meeting
Monday August 24, 2015**

Members Present: Mike Ketchel, Mike Bridgewater, Alison Duckworth, Randy Graves and Camilla Behn.

Others Present: Damon Reed, Jens Hilke, Jamey Fidel, Kate Wanner, Robin Bleier, Amy Polaczyk,Carolynn Schipa, Miron Malboeuf and Ruth Robbins.

Agenda: Call meeting to order, 7:30 pm.

1. Opportunity for Public Comment 7:30 7:45
2. Conservation Commission, draft language which reflects an update to the "Wildlife Habitat" section of Chapter 3 of the Warren Town Plan
3. Review & sign minutes (August 10th, 2015 draft)
4. Other & New business:

UPCOMING REGULAR MEETING DATES: September 14th, September 28th, October 13th, (Tuesday), October 26th, November 16th, November 30th.

Mr. Ketchel called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

The meeting started off with the Chairman of the Conservation Commission [CC], Damon Reed, stating why the CC was here - that back this past winter the PC had asked the CC for recommendations of modifications to Chapter 3, Sense of Place, of the Town Plan. The CC has been working on getting some more detailed data regarding wildlife habitat following up on the data provided by Arrowwood Environmental in 2008 with their *Natural Heritage Inventory and Assessment*. With the help from Jens Hilke of the State fish and Wildlife Dept. and Jamey Fidel of the VT Natural Resources Council, the CC had some suggestions for new and more detailed language for Chapter 3. Ms. Wanner also of the CC, commented that there was really nothing new other than addressing some inconsistencies due to lack of definitions which they provided. In addition they went into more depth on the issue of forest fragmentation.

Mr. Fidel spoke about how he and Mr. Hilke worked together with Mr. Hilke's forte being in the area of mapping and GIS while regulations were his strength. Mr. Hilke said he used the Arrowwood data and put together maps that were appropriate for planners to use and make planning decisions from. Mr. Fidel worked on reviewing our Town Plan which he commented had a solid foundation, and then provided possible definitions and additional language for clarification purposes. One particular suggestion was a definition of "critical wildlife habitat" and adding the use of "significant wildlife habitat" as well.

Both Mr. Fidel and Mr. Hilke talked about forest fragmentation as being development that occurs without any regard to "patterns". By strengthening the natural resource standards development can

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still take place but in balance with those natural resources deemed important to the town to protect and maintain. Mr. Ketchel noticed that the suggested language they submitted used the word “should” versus “shall” or “must be”. Mr. Fidel said that they would leave it up to the PC as to how they wanted it, that they were only offering this as a suggestion or advisory. The question was asked as to whether or not these standards would be best to be consistent amongst all towns and Mr. Hilke said that the values and economy of each town was different so consistency would be difficult to attain. The PC then spent some time reviewing some maps, one in particular was an updated wildlife significant habitat map, which also helps in visibly defining “significant wildlife habitat”. Mr. Fidel and Mr. Hilke noted that their suggestions were largely supported by the information provided by the Arrowwood work. They also offered to be of any help the PC needed in moving forward on modifications to these issues discussed in the Town Plan.

The members reviewed and signed the minutes from the previous meeting. In other business it was mentioned that a representative of the company wanting to install the solar array up at Sugarbush was willing to come in to the PC to address their aesthetic concerns about the project. Mr. Malboeuf said he would get them on the schedule.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ruth V. Robbins
DRB/PC Assistant
Planning Commission

Mike Ketchel date

Camilla Behn date

Alison Duckworth date

Randy Graves date

Mike Bridgewater date