

VILLAGE OF OLD BENNINGTON  
MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING

October 9, 2023

Members Present: Nancy Coseo (Chair), Galen Jones (Vice-Chair), Carl Feltz, Renny Ponvert, Brian Scheetz, Deborah Towslee (Zoning Administrator)

Community Members Present: Matthew Denham

**Call to Order:** 7:00:58 PM

**Changes to Agenda:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Review Minutes:** Meeting minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission September 11, 2023.

**Motion: To approve minutes as presented.** Made by Mr. Feltz, second by Mr. Jones. Pass unanimously.

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**Planning Commission Meetings and Hearings Rules and Procedures**

Ms. Coseo opened the discussion noting the importance of community engagement at PC meetings, the ability for community members to speak at meetings, but also acknowledging keeping a level of decorum and reasonable limits on time for public comment. Mr. Ponvert added that Chatham House Rule must apply and impressed upon Ms. Towslee that the same Rule applies when documenting meeting minutes.

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**Zoning Application – 7 Fairview Drive**

Mr. Denham offered members his plan to better camouflage a newly installed fence previously approved by the PC under the condition that the fence be covered by landscaping so that at minimum 50% of the fence would be hidden from view by neighbors and passersby. Ornamental grass that grows up to 8-feet in height will be planted in addition to hydrangeas previously approved by the PC to offer additional coverage from view of the fence.

**Motion: To approve** the fence with the previous condition satisfied by planting hydrangea and ornamental grass. Made by Mr. Ponvert, second by Mr. Scheetz. Unanimously approved.

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**Ongoing Bylaw Review Process**

- **Fences**

Mr. Scheetz opened by questioning fence height limitation when in many instances there are existing fences that do not comply yet are architecturally pleasing to the eye especially as the Village is considered a walking corridor. After robust discussion members agreed that additional minor changes were required before reviewing again at a later meeting.

- **Tree Removal**

Mr. Jones updated members on potential tree removal. Discussion continued and debate about best-practices and documentation when tree removal requests are received by the Village. The process should differ for a tree located within the Village right-of-way and a tree that is not. Members agreed to continue working on developing a process.

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Mr. Scheetz recommended tabling agenda items Lighting and the Vermont HOME Act until later meetings given the hour and the time necessary to address the HOME Act will be substantial. All members agreed unanimously.

**Motion: To Adjourn.** Made by Mr. Scheetz, second by Mr. Feltz. Agreed unanimously at 9:04:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Towslee

Zoning Administrator

[Friday, October 13, 2023, 03:39:05 pm]

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