

FINAL MINUTES

APPROVED ON October 7, 2024

Don Wells moved to approve the July 15, August 19, September 9, and September 16, 2024, minutes as drafted.

Vanessa Kittell seconded.

Board unanimously agreed and Melissa Manson signed the July 15, August 19, September 9, and September 16, 2024, minutes and submitted to clerk to publish.

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION AND ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING MINUTES September 16, 2024, 7:00 PM

Members Present: Aaron Forbes, Demetrius Bolduc, Dan Pipes, Peter Burns, Melissa Manson (Chair), Vanessa Kittell

Not Present: Dan Pipes

Minute Taker: Vanessa Kittell

Public Present: Liesel Ulrich-Verderber, Dawn and Albert Menard, Julia Callan, Cathy & Rusty Branon, Torrey Crossman, Lynda Ulrich, Chuck Verderber, Kristina Bolduc; Hillary Stone (via Zoom); Luke Slumba (NWRP), Emily Klofft (NWRP)

1. **At 7:03 PM:** Chair opened meeting and established that a quorum was present.
2. **Adjustments to and adoption of the agenda:** Peter Burns moved to approve agenda as drafted, and Don Wells seconded. Board unanimously agreed to adopt agenda as drafted.
3. **Public comment:** None.
4. **New Business:**
 - a. **Review of Development Constraints Analysis:** Emily Klofft and Luke Slumba of NWRP presented the Sept. 16, 2024, Development Constraints Analysis Memo and Map, available at: https://www.nrpcvt.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/FairfieldDevelopmentConstraintsMapMemo_2024_September16.pdf

NWRP observed that following the Board's last meeting, the constraint analysis mapping showed that while the development constraints do not neatly correlate into zoning district boundaries, the Upland District contained the greatest amount of severe or absolute constraints with 71% of its area being covered by these restrictions. The Village Districts contained nearly half of the areas (48%) in severe or absolute constraints.

Take aways from the analysis included that more development is (roughly) occurring where fewer constraints exist such as in the southwest corner of the Town, the Swamp

Road area, and in the Fairfield Pond area. Little development was occurring in the Village Districts.

Public comments focused on barriers for development in the Village Districts and whether NWRP could provide by-law revisions to equip the Board with planning tools to invite and incentivize more development in the Villages. Albert Menard stated that while the Village Districts were at capacity in connection with the existing municipal water sources, the Water District was not limited in sourcing alternative water sources to permit growth in the Villages. Others stated that the Village Districts were also constrained by current septic systems. The Board observed that where municipal septic existed these constraints go away. Torrey Crossman stated that where the Town creates opportunity to lessen development constraints in the Village Districts it could serve to reduce development pressure on other Districts and areas.

b. **Discussion of Standards to Determine Base-Density of Subdivisions:**

NWRP presented various policy options to determine base density of subdivisions, see memo at: https://www.nrpcvt.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/NRPC_FairfieldSubdivisionStandards_2024_Updated.pdf

NWRP discussed using minimum lot size, removing undevelopable land in density calculations, requiring a building/development envelope, and separating lot size from density. NWRP observed that the present by-laws use minimum lot size and require a building/development envelope in connection with lots containing Conservation Resources.

The Board expressed interest in considering all of options presented by NWRP among those that may be adopted in any by-law revision. The Board discussed hosting a public forum in the coming months wherein NWRP would present various options for by-law revisions and permitting the public to express preferences for by-law revision options.

The public comments emphasized interest in developing conservatively and recognized that changes to the by-laws would affect both the Town's present culture and its future.

5. **Reminder of Meetings:**

- Next Regular Zoning Board of Adjustment and Planning Commission Meeting: **October 7th at 7:000 p.m.**
- Next By-Law Review Meeting: **October 21, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.**

6. **MOTION:** to adjourn is made by Vanessa Kittell and seconded by Don Wells at **8:51 P.M.**