

MEETING MINUTES
MUNICIPALITY OF WOODSTOCK, VERMONT
WOODSTOCK PLANNING COMMISSION
31 The Green
Woodstock, VT 05091

The Woodstock Planning Commission held a public meeting on January 8th, 2025, to discuss the following:

Members present: Matt Driscoll, Alex Mulley, Sarah Glasser Tucker, Megan Landis, Mary Margaret Sloan, Brad Lawrence & Laura Powell (ex-officio member).

Public present: Harry Falconer, Jacob Hemmerick, Trena Tolliver

Staff present: Stephanie Appelfeller, Mike Tuller, and Molly Maxham

Administrative Tasks

1. **Call to Order** – Matt Driscoll called the meeting to order at 6:01pm
2. **Minutes:**

Sarah Glasser Tucker motioned to approve as printed.

Matt Driscoll seconded.

Vote. 6-0. Approved.

3. **Public Comment: None**

4. **Discussion of NDA Designation:**

Harry Falconer and Jacob Hemmerick agree to swap the order of their presentations. Jacob Hemmerick introduces himself as Planning and Policy Manager in the Department of Housing and Community Development with the State of Vermont. Jacob Hemmerick explains that he is there to present on the Neighborhood Development Area Designation Program (NDA). Jacob Hemmerick outlines the benefits of the NDA designation, including tax and regulatory incentives, funding incentives, and priority points for state grants. He outlines the application process for NDA designation, including eligibility requirements and the role of regional planning commissions. Trina Tolliver asks about the possibility of extending the NDA designation to the East End of Woodstock. Jacob Hemmerick confirms that there is room for extension and explains the application process. Jacob Hemmerick discusses the constraints in Woodstock, such as flood hazard areas and steep slopes. Harry Falconer underlines the benefits of NDA designations as well as understanding procedure.

5. **Discussion of Municipal Planning Grants and Bylaw Compliance:**

Harry Falconer presents a hypothetical exercise to walk through the bylaws for a multi-family housing project. He explains the process of determining what can be built on a site and the specific conditions for approval. Harry Falconer highlights the usability issues with the current bylaws, such as inconsistent terminology and lack of clear standards. He emphasizes the

need for empirical criteria and clear, measurable standards in the bylaws. Harry Falconer recommends minimizing the use of conditional use approval and focusing on site plan approval. He suggests offering packages for specific architectural styles to streamline the approval process. Harry Falconer mentions the importance of promoting more housing in Woodstock and the need for clear, user-friendly bylaws. Stephanie Appelfeller thanks Harry Falconer for his informative presentation and asks about the current advisory board process. Harry Falconer explains that the way advisory boards operate needs to be updated to comply with state law. Mary Margaret Sloan asks about the enforceability of the current advisory board process. Harry Falconer states that he is unsure as he does not have a law background, but he believes the process is unenforceable. Laura Powell thanks Harry Falconer for his presentation.

Sarah Glasser Tucker motioned to adjourn.

Brad Lawrence seconded.

Vote. 6-0. Approved.

Planning Updates

Jacob Hemmerick and Harry Falconer plan to share presentation materials with other Planning Commission Members. Laura Powell plans to share the link to the bylaws with the other Planning Commission Members. Harry Falconer advises consulting with Two Rivers Ottauquechee over the enforceability of the current advisory board process.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47pm