

Shaftsbury Planning Commission

August 9, 2023

Held remotely only, via Zoom

1. Call to order

The meeting came to order at 6:02 p.m. Present were commissioners Naomi Miller (chair), Chris Williams, Martha Cornwell, Mike Foley, and a little later, Nancy Burns. Also present was BCRC Assistant Director/Planning Program Manager Janet Hurley and zoning administrator Shelly Stiles.

2. July 26 minutes

Ms. Cornwell moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. In a discussion of the revised letter to the Select Board re the PC's position on the solar project, Ms. Stiles said she inserted a paragraph regarding a rate discount for Shaftsbury residents as requested. (It had been mistakenly removed in an earlier version.) The motion passed 3-0-1.

3. Public comments

There were none.

4. Bylaw revisions and hearing

Ms. Miller summarized the changes and their rationale for Ms. Hurley. It was agreed that the word "shall" was called for (in a phrase, a mistake, using both "shall" and "may"). Ms. Cornwell moved to approve the bylaw revisions and send them to a public hearing to be hosted by the commission on September 13. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-0.

5. Discussion of Town's success in implementing Town Plan action items and BCRC assistance to towns

Ms. Hurley said the answers supplied to the survey shared with commissioners didn't produce any problems that she noted.

She said the Plan's revised format, focusing on goals and actions, went far toward complying with ACCD requirements.

The group discussed the RBES program. Ms. Hurley will add a discussion of the program to the Enhanced Energy Plan document.

Ms. Hurley said she hopes to continue to offer annual training to municipal board members and officials.

Ms. Hurley agreed there is no issue with the Town's understanding of when the DRB can review applications (for conditional uses as well as permitted uses requiring site plan review).

She noted the PC routinely reviews and revises the bylaws.

Ms. Stiles said she considered the Development Review Board a very responsible and responsive board.

Ms. Hurley noted that BCRC helped the PC with several non-regulatory issues, including economic development and energy.

She noted that BCRC has helped the Town recently with bylaw revisions, the Plan, the EEP, economic development planning (EDP), GIS maps. She said she'd like to offer more help with communications with other PCs in the region – to help all stay informed as to what other boards are doing.

Ms. Cornwell reported she is the new BCRC representative. Cinda Morse will continue as alternate.

Ms. Hurley wondered whether the PC could pay more attention to improving child care options. Ms. Cornwell said the EDC is working with Equitable Cities on that and other issues. Ms. Hurley suggested that work be folded into the Town Plan at some point.

Ms. Hurley also suggested that the PC consider adopting a river corridor bylaw.

6. Other business

Ms. Hurley asked the commissioners whether they wished to apply for another bylaw modernization grant. The application is due November 1. The funding announcement would be made in January. The project would have to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2025. It could include revisions to the subdivision regulations, and new HOME Act changes. The PC and Select Board would have to sign a resolution committing to pursuing the grant.

Ms. Hurley will try to get out a draft EEP early next week.

The commissioners agreed to not pursue another BMP grant.

Mr. Foley moved to adjourn at 7:15 p.m. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 5-0-

0.