



Town of Barnard, Vermont

Chartered July 17, 1761

P.O. Box 274
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(802) 234-9211

BARNARD PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

JULY 17, 2023

Present: Steve Cota (Chair), Gerald Fredrickson, Greyling VanAlstyne, Kate Reeves, Carin Park.

Also Present: Richard Lancaster (Selectman), Rob Ramrath (Administrative Officer). Kyle Katz (Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission). See attached attendance sheet.

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM.

2. Review agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

3. Public comments

Letters were read into the record from Katie Widness and Jennifer Tobin Haydock (attached).

Follows are summaries of public comments:

- Jim Jackson stated in support for hillside and ridgeline regulations.
- Dean Edmunds supported reasonable regulations while being aware that many properties have been held by owners for a long time who have been paying taxes. He wanted the Commission to be sure to maintain caution for over-restricting building rights. He commented that he has a short-term rental, and it is an important part of his income.
- Tom Morse strongly supported ridgeline provisions in our zoning regulations. He commented that a stampede would be coming to town over the next 20 years. He encouraged adoption similar to Pomfret's.
- Jenny Lane was concerned about regulating wind turbines.
- Chip Davis Said that short-term rental income was typically an important component to offset property taxes. Regarding ridgeline development he commented on the negative effects of light pollution and erosion.
- Jill Leavitt encouraged consideration of the International Dark Sky Association to manage lighting issues.

- Ellen Miles was in favor of ridgeline regulation and thought that screening was an example of reasonable regulation to minimize impact. She had concerns about short-term rentals, commenting that guests may not care about the community and therefore the nature of the local community changes with short term rentals. She also had concerns on the impact of short-term rentals to long term rentals, potentially limiting access for people who could, in the future, have tremendous positive impact to the community. She gave examples of Fable Farm and Barn Arts. She had concerns especially for the Silver Lake area with septic overload.
- Edythe Wright mentioned that employers having difficulty finding staff as short-term rentals compete with long-term rental opportunities.
- Lance Webster strongly supported landowner rights and was against ridgeline regulation.
- Will Dodson stated there was a need for short-term rentals for local consumers, and weddings. He said there was a disparity between the safety and regulatory requirements for formal business operations that were not required of typical home-based short-term rentals. He said he prefers long-term rentals in his own case.
- Margaret Edwards asserted that a system of short-term rental permitting would allow the collection of data to make better decisions. She said that now we only have anecdotal data. More data would allow thoughtful regulation as understanding matures.
- Mary Blanton said that we needed short-term rentals, but not absentee owners. She said she was against the concept of absentee owners renting property in Barnard.
- Marty Bell said that he had a short-term rental across the street from the Barnard General Store. He said he still must follow state law and fire code. He said that short-term rentals have been happening for decades around Silver Lake and that regulations must make sense. He was in support of considering ridgeline regulations while maintaining property rights.
- Bill Kline said that any ridgeline zoning needed to be carefully mapped. He stated you should not be able to see ridgeline construction from Silver Lake.
- Ed Jodice was concerned about lighting on the Ridge lines. He believed compromise is important in the formation of any ridgeline regulation.
- Ann Jacobs Offered support for ridgeline regulation.
- Teo Zagar said he had looked at the Pomfret ridgeline regulations. Any regulations that Barnard creates should balance property rights versus the public good.
- Arlene Dallalfer said that Airbnb situations are very different from historical summer rentals. She said rentals for just a few days at a time generate follow up issues such as cleaning which increases traffic and difficulty parking. She said some people are good guests while others are not. She supported short term rental regulations to manage this situation.

- Heather Surprenant said that short-term rentals have a clear impact on the availability of long-term rentals.
- Sharon Johnson was in favor of limiting the number of permits issued to manage the balance between long-term and short-term rentals.
- Tom Morse shared that the audience needed to understand the difference between the town plan which offered general direction versus detailed zoning regulations.
- Eric Withington proposed potential tax relief to landowners who may commit to not build on a ridgeline. He stated he frequently uses short-term rentals himself via Airbnb and his experience at his sugar house is that most short-term renters are friendly families.
- Pete Stoddard asked to understand what the process of the creation of new zoning regulations would be.
- Jim Clarke asked how the Town plan would be finalized. Kyle Katz went through the process for him.
- Fadia Williamson asked who wrote the town plan. The Commission explained the process.
- Bob Edmunds stated that one of his concerns was clear-cutting of a ridgeline. He mentioned an example where a ridgeline was clear-cut thereby changing the character of the whole area for many years.
- Ellen Miles asked for the town to consider a way for remote participation in public meetings.

4. Approve Minutes of May 18, 2023

The minutes were approved.

5. Town Plan Update

a. Follow up from the 6/6 Town Plan Forum

The Planning Commission further refined language in the Draft Town Plan based on input from the Forum.

6. Process Planning for Zoning Regulation Update for 2024

This item was tabled for the next meeting.

7. Other business

a. Consideration of Ed Jodice for Planning Commission Membership

Attendee Ed Jodice put his name forward for consideration for membership. The Commission deliberated the request and voted to recommend Ed for membership to the Selectboard for consideration at the July 19, 2023 meeting.

b. Set Future Dates

August 14, 2023 was set as the next Planning Commission Meeting for final review of the Town Plan. September 25, 2023 was set as the next formal hearing date for the Town Plan.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Minutes prepared by Rob Ramrath, Administrative Officer. All votes unanimous unless otherwise indicated. The next Planning Commission meeting will be the August 14, 2023, 7:00 PM at the Town Hall.

NAME PRINT LEGIBLY

Ed Jodice

Teo Zagar

Ellen Miles

Steve Killen

Linda Beaumariage

Adelaide McCracken

CATHLEEN GIANFRANCESCO

MARTIN BELL

Peter Stoddard

Heather Surprenant

Dean Edwards

Eric Wickings

Joanne King

NAME PRINT LEGIBLY

Tom MORSE

Jill Leavitt

Fadia F. Williamson

Arlene Palkoff

Ann Jacobs

Barbara Kelley

Koko Twigg-Smith

William Klein

Robert Edmund

JIM CLARKE

Margaret Edwards

Jane Tylus

Elizabeth Gray

Jim Jackson

Sharon JACKSON

Brooks Wright

Edythe Wright

Mary Blanton

John Dibble

Jeanette Lane

PATRICK KILLACKY

Pamela Fraser

Bill & Judy MARTIN

Will Dodson

Eric Johnston

Julie Johnston

CHARLES DAVIS

BOB CREAN & HEIDI GENARO

NAME PRINT LEGIBLY

Kate Reeves

Gerald Fredrickson

Greyling Van Alstyn

Richard Farnosta - SELECT BOARD

Lance Webster