



Town of Barnard, Vermont

Chartered July 17, 1761

P.O. Box 274
Barnard, Vermont 05031
(802) 234-9211

BARNARD PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES **PUBLIC HEARING, BARNARD TOWN HALL** **September 25, 2024**

Present: Ed Jodice, Kate Reeves, Carin Park

ALSO PRESENT: Kyle Katz of Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Commission (TRORC), Selectman Richard Lancaster, Clerk Kassie Hull, George Keller, Frank Verkaik, Susan Botha, Gerry Botha, Elisa Tarlow, Michael Tipping, Jannine Tipping

1. **Call to Order.** The hearing opened at 7:16PM.
2. **Review agenda.**
3. **Public comments.**

Comment: Frank Verkaik, who said he has a cabin on a ridgeline, expressed concern about people not being able to move to higher ground (out of the valley) where it will be less likely to flood. He also stated that the proposal “feels elitist” and seems to only be focused on “aesthetics.” Frank also asked how the new zoning changes would be enforced, as he “wants things fair” because from what he’s seen “there’s never been anything fair done” in Barnard.

Planning Commission Response: Kate Reeves said the intention is not to prevent development, but to have development done properly so that it does not ruin the ridges. Carin Park discussed conditional use permitting and review standards. Ed Jodice referred to the statement of purpose of the regulations and to the goals of the Town Plan. Kyle Katz said the visual impact of ridgeline development is only measured from public roads, not from other people’s homes.

Comment: Elisa Tarlow agreed that the beauty and integrity of the town are important, but she does not think the town should restrict people from developing on developable land. She asked why the slope allowed for driveways and private roads changed from 18 to 10 percent, and what would happen if this went into effect, and someone couldn’t build on their land?

Planning Commission Response: Kyle Katz stated that driveway standards will typically have a 10 or 12 percent maximum slope. He pointed out that this will not impact preexisting driveways and private roads, unless a new section is added to a preexisting one. He also explained zoning variances for when you feel that you’re in an “impossible situation.” Kyle also reminded attendees that forestry and agricultural practices are exempt.

Comment: Susan Botha wondered if the slope change from 18 to 10 percent is for public safety and based in part on the increase of flooding in our town.

Planning Commission Response: Ed, Carin, and Kate agreed that they want to better understand how slope impacts public safety and emergency vehicle access. They will ask the BVFD if they have an opinion or anecdote to share with the PC to inform any decision.

Comment: Jeannine Tipping said that she thinks the upkeep of the driveway or private road is the responsibility of the owner, which is typically in a homeowner's insurance policy.

Planning Commission Response: Ed Jodice thanked everyone for attending the public hearing. He encouraged attendees to attend a future planning commission meeting with additional comments.

4. **Other business.**
5. **Adjourn.** The hearing was adjourned at 8:09PM.

Minutes Prepared by Kassie Hull, Clerk of the meeting. The next regular meeting is Monday, September 30, 2024, at 7:00PM at the Town Hall Offices.