



**TOWN OF WILLISTON**  
**Planning Commission Minutes**  
*December 16, 2014 - 7:00 P.M.*

**Williston Town Hall Annex Conference Room**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Meghan Cope, Jake Mathon, Tom Walsh, Kevin Batson, Michael Alvanos, Planning Commission members; Ken Belliveau, Matt Boulanger, planning staff; Richard McGuire, Town Manager, Doug Goulette, Lamoreaux and Dickinson, David Appenzellar and Wes Pastor, New England Theological Seminary (NETS).

1) CALL TO ORDER

JAKE MATHON called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2) POSSIBLE SPECIFIC PLAN FOR THE FORMER PINE RIDGE SCHOOL PROPERTY-  
NEW ENGLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Wes PASTOR explained the operation of NETS and what they were hoping to do with the Pine Ridge property (a “residency program” for ministers). Ken Belliveau explained that their use of the property would require the approval of a Specific Plan by the Planning Commission and the Selectboard.

Meghan Cope asked how many people were in residence. Wes PASTOR said they would like to be able to have 10 couples at a time as well as an internship program serving 10-20 students.

Jake Mathon asked if any of the faculty and staff would live on campus. Wes PASTOR said that it was possible that they would like to eventually build housing for the next president of the organization.

Mike Alvanos asked about the necessary improvements that would have to be made to the site. Wes PASTOR said that the bank (current owner) has already done some maintenance work. David Appenzellar said that burst pipes had been repaired and the damaged dorm was again ready for paint and carpet.

Meghan Cope asked if there would be children living on the site. Wes PASTOR said that many of the couples attending the program would have children with them. Students in the program are generally in their 30’s.

Jake Mathon asked about the provision of substantial public benefit. Wes PASTOR said that the application made by Maple Leaf Farm for the property would be a starting point for a Specific Plan application.

The group discussed the length of the process as applied to Maple Leaf Farm. Ken Belliveau said that the more specific the application is, the better the process will move along. Ken

Belliveau noted a number of other items that might lengthen the process, including existing Act 250 conditions on the site.

Doug Goulette asked about the specificity of the application. Ken Belliveau and Kevin Batson discussed the need for the application to be specific to aid in the eventual discretionary permit review. Meghan Cope said that the more clear the applicants can be about the site design and exactly what the possible future uses might be.

The group discussed how Specific Plans are amended. Ken Belliveau said that in the best case, the plan would be written in a way that some changes could be addressed at the DRB through the discretionary permit process.

Wes PASTOR asked about the partial exemptions under Vermont State Law. The group discussed how the review would be different if NETS was licensed as a school by the Vermont Department of Education and entitled to a partial exemption. If that was the case, only discretionary permit review by the DRB would be required.

### 3) VILLAGE ZONING DISTRICT- DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS DISCUSSION

Ken Belliveau explained the situation in the Village. A currently-proposed residential development in the VZD has raised some citizen concerns about development standards in the Village. The change in the side yard setback from 15 feet to 10 feet in early 2013 was hotly discussed. Citizen input has also requested that commission consider having commercial development count against the allowable residential density on parcels in the VZD.

The group discussed density in the Village and commercial uses.

Meghan Cope said that she thought it was appropriate for the commission to look at issues in the Village related to density and mixed use in a comprehensive way. Michael Alvanos said that he would like for the commission to take a broader view and look at ways to encourage a diversity of dwelling unit sizes and uses. The group discussed the Village streetscape.

Ken Belliveau said that what he was hearing from the commission that opening up discussion of the Village would entail a much broader discussion than just one development standard. Belliveau said that the staff would look at what kind and scope of public process would have to have.

### 4) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND BUDGET DISCUSSION

Ken Belliveau said that two weeks ago he suggested that the commission members read the budget bring comments back for the next meeting so they can be transmitted back to the selectboard in a timely manner.

Belliveau said that one comment he had was that all CIP items should be identified with a Town Plan goal. Kevin Batson said that he had his usual comments about bike paths and sidewalks and the CIP only identifying sidewalks and not bike paths. Batson said that he had been asking for a bike/ped committee to be established in Williston for years. The group discussed the idea of adding the need for a bike/ped committee in the Town Plan.

Ken Belliveau asked if the commission had any comments to forward to the Selectboard related to the CIP. Meghan Cope said that she wanted to be cautious and avoid a situation where the commission had reviewed a proposed public works garage location as part of a prior CIP only to find it proposed on another site. Belliveau said that he was not aware of any other proposed facilities that would be in a similar situation.

On a motion made by Meghan Cope and seconded by Jake Mathon the commission voted 5-0 to find that the proposed CIP is consistent with the 2011-2016 Town Plan.

5) DECEMBER 2, 2014 MINUTES

On a motion made by Meghan Cope and seconded by Michael Alvanos the commission members voted 5-0 to approve the minutes with the following corrections:

- Fix the motion on bylaw changes to show that the new GZDW chapter will reference WDB 22.
- Change “peaks and valleys in cost” to “peaks and valleys in annual expenditures.”

6) OTHER BUSINESS

Kevin Batson asked about getting more participation in the process of adopting the new “Gateway West” Zoning District. Batson said that creating the new district is a major change and that he wanted to make sure there were a lot of minds involved. Ken Belliveau said that he would invite members of the DRB HAAC, and other citizens to participate in the upcoming hearing.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.