

DRAFT MINUTES
Town of Peacham Planning Commission
Tues, July 18, 2023 07:00 PM
Via Zoom

PC members present: Adam Dobson, Bob Hanson, Katherine Siner, Will Kempton, Anna Rubin

Public: Ken Danielson, Alfred Dedam, Jake Thomas

Guest: Rod Francis, PlaceSense

Anna R called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Adam D motioned to approve the minutes from June 2023. Will K seconded. The minutes were approved.

Anna R introduces the Bylaw Modernization project:

- Planning Commission's current mandate to update bylaws stems from the Town Plan in 2019 (revised in 2021)
- The PC received grant support from the State to hire experts to update land regulations to support the kind of growth and development that conforms to the vision expressed in the Town Plan
- This project reflects changes to statute and the need to update language that is out-of-date
- The PC is working with Rod Francis and Brandy Saxton of PlaceSense to identify areas of the current zoning regulation with the goal of increasing housing choice, affordability and opportunity. PlaceSense is also working with Danville and St. Johnsbury on similar projects.
- PlaceSense met with the Planning Commission in April to launch the Bylaw Modernization project

Rod Francis presented the technical review (audit) of Peacham's current bylaws:

PlaceSense produced an analysis of Peacham's existing land use regulations that examines the extent to which they support or pose barriers to housing creation: "The technical review evaluates the existing (adopted) Peacham zoning bylaw against the 2019 Peacham Town Plan, current statute — including Act 47 the HOME Act — and the Enabling Better Places Guide (BPG) produced by the Department of Housing and Community Development." The Home Act went into effect as of July 1. This statute is a delayed recognition that Vermont is responding to the crisis in supply and availability of housing that is affordable to the people in the median income range.

- The audit of our zoning bylaw demonstrates instances where the current bylaw could be revised
 - to align with current statutory language
 - to conform with the Better Places Guide
 - to support the Peacham Town Plan
- The goal of our work right now is to ensure that Peacham's bylaws do not unduly hinder the creation of housing.

There was discussion concerning

- Minimum plot size: 10 acres vs. 2 acres
- Peacham's agricultural future
- Accessory Dwelling Units (Code inspection for life safety questions: towns that are small enough may be able to ask the regional Fire Marshall to conduct inspections.)
- Good for Peacham to have a position on inspections for dual occupancy dwellings. Larger communities have code enforcement officer to inspect the property.
- Enforcement

PlaceSense presents the audit as a guide to inform the next steps. The Planning Commission takes the recommendations under advisement to inform long-range planning. We do not intend to act on everything in this document.

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 PM.

There will be a walk through Peacham with Rod Francis and Brandy Saxton of PlaceSense on Thurs, Aug 17.