

**Danby Planning Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting
January 24, 2013**

Present:

Joel Gagnon
Anne Klingensmith
Ted Melchen
Robert Roe

Absent:

Frank Kruppa
Steve Selin

Others Present:

Secretary	Pamela Goddard
Code Officer	Sue Beeners
Town Board	Leslie Connors
Public	Jutta Locker, Naomi Strichartz

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Board was opened at 7:07pm

Appoint Chair Pro-tem

The Board voted to appoint Robert Roe as Chair Pro-tem.

Bed and Breakfast Dwelling Proposal

Jutta Locker presented a proposal for a Bed and Breakfast Dwelling at 354 Comfort Road. This structure used to belong to Locker's mother. She is currently paying high insurance rates, as the house has been classified as "unoccupied." Locker stated that she regularly uses the house and it has been well maintained in the two years since her mother's death. Locker would like to use this as a B&B, catering to Stork executives and families seeking a short term rental.

Members of the Planning Board asked questions about parking and her business plan. There is adequate parking for the number of anticipated guests. Locker is planning a three bedroom facility. Her plan is to cover expenses on the house.

RESOLUTION NO. 1 OF 2013 - SET PUBLIC HEARING

Resolved, that the Planning Board sets a Public Hearing, to be held on Thursday February 28 at 7pm, to consider granting a Special Permit to Jutta Locker, owner, to use the existing house at 354 Comfort Road, Tax parcel 1.-1-25.22, as a Bed and Breakfast Dwelling.

Moved by Gagnon, Second by Klingensmith.
In favor: Gagnon, Klingensmith, Melchen, Roe.

Recommendation Regarding Speed Limits

There was a discussion about endorsing a 45mph speed limit on Danby Roads. Strichartz asked whether it would be useful to wait until there was a full Board, in order to provide more weight to the resolution. It was decided that there was no need to wait. There was a discussion about the wording of the resolution. Members of the Planning Board noted that there it would be appropriate to lower the speed limit on all or most Town roads.

RESOLUTION NO. 36 OF 2012 - RECOMMENDATION REGARDING SPEED LIMITS

Resolved, that the Town of Danby Planning Board supports the Danby Town Board in its efforts to lower the speed limit on some portion of Comfort Road.

Moved by Klinensmith, Second by Gagnon.

In favor: Gagnon, Klingensmith, Melchen, Roe.

Recommendation Regarding Appointments

The PB held a brief discussion regarding whether there was any alteration to its recommendation to the TB for filling the vacant seat, given that there is a second candidate for the Board. The Board agreed that there is no change in its recommendation.

Town Board Report

Connors thanked members of the PB for attending a recent TB meeting. There was further discussion about a joint TB/PB discussion regarding goals and objectives for the next year and beyond. Connors suggested that the Boards meet together in March.

Connors reported that the West Danby Water District grant was fully funded. Beeners added that this was based on the Water District income survey. This income survey is good for two years for future block grants, for example housing improvements.

Comprehensive Plan Review Recommendations

The Planning Board held an extensive discussion of the Comprehensive Plan review with reports by members on individual sections. This discussion included thoughts about the general structure of the revised sections of the current Danby Comprehensive Plan. Interspersed with the reports of individual section review was a discussion of how to handle thematic overlap between sections. A suggestion was made that there be a separate chapter to show how topics are interrelated. This section or addendum might address the critical issues and driving forces facing Danby at this time.

There were different visions of how to progress, whether to include proposed revisions in the existing sections or combine the new material in a single addendum. The Board also discussed when to invite broader community input by holding public hearings. These questions were not fully resolved.

Strichartz and Roe reported on their review of the **Agriculture Section**. Their review included current obstacles and opportunities for farmers in Danby. The review noted threats to open land and traditional farming from high tax rates and subdivision. Opportunities for alternative agriculture include Community Supported Agriculture farms (such as the Three Swallows/Full Plate farm on Nelson Road), sheep grazing, mushroom growing, and other non-traditional uses. There was some discussion of specific areas of the Agriculture section of the Comprehensive Plan which need updating and those areas which are still relevant.

There was a discussion of how gas drilling pressure might effect Danby agriculture, even if drilling does not take place within the Town. Beeners suggested that the 2011 revision of the Comp. Plan be double checked to see if this has already been addressed. Impacts could include housing development pressure on open space and impacts to adjacent aquifers. This contributed to a discussion of the overlap between sections, such as agriculture, housing, health, etc.

Klingensmith reported on her review of the **Natural Resources Section**. She presented a draft revision of her section. She noted that additional information from several reports, including the aquifer study report, rapid waters report, and the deer management report, still needs to be included in this update. Klingensmith listed several aspects of natural resources that, in the face of industrial development such as gas drilling, she sees as important: that Danby residents value and want to protect our clean air, the right to live in a place that's quiet, and that "dark at night" is a natural resource. Information about the CEA designation process still needs to be inserted.

There was a discussion about long-term critical issues such as habitat fragmentation, threats to natural resources from invasive species (facilitated by climate change), the need for reforestation

from the loss of Ash, Sugar Maples, etc. There is also a concern that FEMA has not produced updated flood plain maps or adequately defined the 100 year flood plain. This has proven to be an issue during recent storms.

The PB discussed whether to include such concerns in the specific section or in a summary chapter. The question of who the audience is for this document was raised in relation to the use of an overarching summary vs. technical detail in some of the sections. A suggestion was made that the document be lucid and clear regarding any changes, so that it can be accessible to Danby residents.

Melchen reported on his review of the **History and Cultural Resources Section**. Melchen reported that there almost no changes are necessary in this section. This section is comprehensive and still pertinent. Melchen recommended that an objective of undertaking oral history projects, coordinated by the Town Historian, be enhanced so that interesting Danby stories may be saved before they are lost. There was a brief discussion about the recent activities of the Town Historian. He also suggested an objective of a designated area for a collection of objects of historical interest, with funding to protect and preserve such objects.

Gagnon reported on his review of the **Housing Section**. He suggested substantial reformatting of this section with a new format with three sections: Context, Planning Considerations, Recommended Actions. He proposed that this revised format would better put things in context. Members of the PB had no objection, other than a concern that this might become too big a job. Most of the existing material could be included in these renamed categories. Context could be divided into, *Who we are* and *Where we live*. Various demographic data would be included in these subheadings. Gagnon posed several statistical considerations to include. Some of this information is available through the most recent Census.

Gagnon also suggested several updated objectives for the Planning Considerations section. These included considerations of housing density vs. sprawl and the impacts of rising energy costs. There was a discussion of various impacts on current development in different sections of the town. Gagnon presented information about new rules that impact the renovation of older structures. A list of zoning changes is included in the proposed recommendations.

Gagnon also reported on his review of the **Transportation Section**. This section requires far less reorganization and additional information. Gagnon would like to see more about biking/hiking trails, planning for bike and pedestrian safety, and updated information about the costs of road maintenance (including the increased need for major repairs from flooding), and transportation costs related to increased energy costs. Recommendations include a plan for rationalizing the system of Town and County roads, with recommendation that speed limits be lowered on Town roads. Mention should be made of the new Road Use Law.

Selin and Kruppa should report on their sections during the February meeting.

Approve Minutes

RESOLUTION NO. 38 OF 2012 - APPROVE MINUTES

Resolved, that the Planning Board of the Town of Danby approves the minutes of November 29, 2012.

Moved by Gagnon, Second by Klingensmith.

In Favor: Gagnon, Klingensmith, Melchen, Roe.

Member items

Klingensmith encouraged PB members to attend the February 21 presentation by USGS scientist Todd Miller on the completed Aquifer Study. She also reported that water monitoring has been taking place in Danby. She has written some of this information as a handout for the presentation.

Roe advised the Board of a sportsman's education open house, involving DEC instructors, to be held at the Spencer-Van Etten School.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 pm.

Pamela Goddard, Planning Board Secretary