Approved Minutes: Marlboro Planning Commission February 11, 2025

In attendance: Tim Segar, Don Sherefkin, Will Shakespeare, Patti Smith, Brian Potter; Mary Sargent, zoning administrator; Lindy Corman, conservation commission. Hunter Jack, conservation commission, via Zoom.

Meeting opened at 5:05 pm. Minutes from the last two meetings are approved unanimously.

Discussion of Conservation Subdivision Regulations (CSR)

We resume discussion of CSR and what we have found from other towns. Brattleboro Land Use and Development Regulations - Sec 355 is particularly relevant.

Don suggests that incentives may be the best way to encourage a conservation mentality for developers. He notes that a number of protections are already in place, and that we may want to strike a balance if a goal is to encourage home building. For example, might CSR apply only to larger parcels?

Lindy reports that the Conservation Commission has discussed CSR, and that there was some division among its members on the topic. They asked to what degree should we mandate vs provide incentives? Brief discussion of whether there are other types of incentives to consider besides density incentives (e.g. system efficiencies).

Tim suggests that we clarify our goals for CSR. Is it to bring responsible action to whatever development may come to Marlboro? To inform affordable housing development? To preserve the characteristics that already exist here?

Discussion continues on how shared property in a CSR is owned and maintained. The role of land trusts is discussed; Tim will reach out to Vermont Land Trust for more background. Patti notes that some other towns (Waitsfield, Charlotte, Brattleboro) have addressed this question in their regulations and shares the language from Waitsfield with the group.

Tim considers that we may need more outside expertise if we are going to undertake CSR. Patti contends that it may be more straightforward than we think. Will mentions a connection in South Burlington that may be useful.

We restate some of our key questions: is it a requirement, what is the minimum size, and how is shared conserved land managed? Brian asks, in the absence of data from comparable towns, how do we understand the impact of CSR on potential development, and whether it could serve as an enticement or an impediment to the sort of development we might want to see?

As another point of reference, Patti shares the NH Conservation Subdivision regulations and notes that slope maps of Marlboro are needed.

Tim affirms to Lindy and Hunter that we welcome the Conservation Commission's input on this topic. They will continue discussion and plan to attend our next meeting.

As the next step of our work, we will all do a close reading of the Brattleboro (3.55) and NH CSR and bring edits to our next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.
The next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2025 at 5pm.
Submitted by Brian Potter