

CALAIS PLANNING COMMISSION (PC)

August 6, 2024 Minutes

PC Members Present: Jarrod Weiss, Gary Root, Melanie Kehne, John McCullough, Kathy Hentcy, and Rachel Seelig (via ZOOM)

Guest: Calais resident Harris Roen

1. Meeting convened around 7:08 p.m.
2. PC introduced itself to Harris Roen. Mr. Roen was a Calais who moved to Burlington, but has recently moved back to Calais to property on Wheeler Road. He asked about the seemingly arbitrary Resource Recreation and Highland Overlay zoning districts. These Districts are intended to protect steep, fragile thin soils from development by establishing their boundaries based on elevation. Mr. Roen pointed out that using a set elevation as a zoning district boundary ignores the fact that some land areas above the elevation are not steep, fragile, thin soils, and that some land characteristics below the elevation are. The PC said that they would visit Resource Recreation and Highland Overlay with the idea that a better survey of land types might reshape a more realistic zoning map.
3. Reviewed and approved July 16 Minutes.
4. PC to start doing three meetings a month so that Town Plan (TP) rewrite stays on schedule. It was agreed that the Tuesdays of August 27, September 24, and October 29 be Special Meetings attended via ZOOM.
5. It was reported that the Calais Selectboard (SB) wants the Town Plan to contain language regarding the use of the Calais Elementary School building if it should close and its students are moved to another school. It was suggested that language with regard to school closing go in Municipal Facilities and not in the Education section of the TP.
6. August 20 PC meeting = Housing and Recreational Resources. Rachel Seelig reported that advances in septic designs may allow development densification of Village Districts
7. Kathy Hentcy will work with Gary Root on Agriculture Section.
8. Discussion of school
 - a. Closing
 - b. WCUUSD schedules
 - c. Does closing the school make Calais a more or less desirable place to live?
9. Discussed mold problems at Adamant Community Club building. Voiced unanimous support for the Town to be involved in remediation efforts.
10. Meeting adjourned 8:48 pm