

**NEWPORT CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**\*May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016\***

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Charles Elliott, Robert Currier, Clark Curtis, and Woodman Page

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dan Ross

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Amy Brasseur, Pam Ladds, and Bradley Stockwell

**7:05 p.m.** Chair Charles Elliott called the meeting to order. Clark Curtis moved to approve the minutes of the April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016 meeting. This was seconded by Robert Currier. **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION.**

**7:08 p.m. Discuss proposed ordinance for back yard chickens:** Chair Charles Elliott began the meeting by distributing two documents on raising domestic poultry and a copy of South Burlington's chicken ordinance. Charles Elliott explained that he had originally requested information from the UVM Extension Service which referred him to the Penn State Cooperative Extension program. A brief summary of the Penn State material was provided along with the South Burlington chicken ordinance. Chair Elliott will be taking this information and using it for the creation of Newport's own chicken ordinance. The number of chickens that are being raised within Newport is not known since most animal hobbyist are not infringing on their neighbors. It is clear that Newport needs an ordinance to deal with this situation. The South Burlington ordinance is similar to the Essex ordinance which Clark Curtis had previously reported on. Charles Elliott stated that he had discussions with Mayor Monette over the issue. An ordinance is the best way forward since a zoning bylaw violation could take up to a year or more to move through the environmental court system.

Clark Curtis stated that while traveling to work throughout Newport that he is seeing more loose chickens. It is not clear who owns these chickens, but that raising chickens is becoming more popular. A member of the audience, Amy Brasseur asked if the city bylaw would remain in effect or if there would be any changes to it. Chair Elliott stated that a sentence would be added which would make reference to the added ordinance. Within the next couple of weeks Charles Elliott will draft a chicken ordinance to be reviewed at the next meeting where it will then be forwarded to the city council. It was also noted that the ordinance would be designed to penalize those raising poultry who were infringing on their neighbors by allowing their chickens to run free through neighbor's yards or gardens.

**7:45 p.m. Discuss proposed Certificate of Occupancy:** Chair Elliott distributed a draft copy of the proposed new city application for certificate of occupancy and a checklist/guide in which the zoning administrator can use. The draft is very similar to what Derby has in effect. There are a couple of issues which require the commission's attention on the certificate of occupancy. The first one is that Newport officials are receiving numerous requests for certificates of occupancy from individuals who require it

in order to obtain financing from their financial institution. The other issue relates to accounting problems where city officials are not being properly notified of someone using water and sewer services for a home that is presently being occupied. It is hoped that the draft certificate and the zoning administrator's checklist will rectify some of these issues. The certificate will not be required for current apartments, but will be necessary for changes in use of a property or ownership, new construction, and when a property is ready for occupancy. Charles Elliott maintains hard copies of the zoning compliance within his personal files and also scans these documents. Clark Curtis inquired on fees and was informed that all fees are set by the city council. Chair Elliott added that he might propose a one time, larger fee that would cover the cost of both the initial zoning building permit and the certificate of occupancy.

**8: 05 p.m. Other Business:** Charles Elliott presented information related to an upcoming planning meeting to be held at Lake Morley.

**8:07 p.m. Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 7p.m.

**8:08 p.m.** Robert Currier made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded by Woodman Page. **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION.**

*Minutes taken and transcribed by Woodman Page*

Approved: Charles Elliott Date: 6-7-16