

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minutes for September 9, 2008 Meeting
Approved on October 15, 2008

Commission Members Present: Seth Jensen, Patrick Haller, Jason Hoover and Mark Letorney.

Commission Members Absent: N/A

Also Present: Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator).

The meeting began at approximately 7:09 p.m.

Planning Commission Interviews:

Melissa explained that Larry Reynolds withdrew his Planning Commission application due to back surgery. However, Michael Nelson is still interested in serving on the Planning Commission. The Commission asked Melissa to contact former applicants Larry White and Ben Ware to see if they are still interested in serving. Furthermore, they asked her to place another notice on the Front Porch Forum. The Commission concluded that they would hold interviews with interested persons at their October 15th meeting.

Schedule Regular Meeting Date:

The Commission agreed to hold regular meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of the month with an alternate/special meeting date of the 1st Wednesday of the month to be held if additional meetings are necessary due to work load.

Draft Rules of Procedure

The Commission briefly discussed the draft rules of procedure. The Commission asked Melissa to make a few minor changes prior to their next meeting. At which time they hope to review and approve the document.

Elect Officers

Pat MOVED to elect Mark Letorney as Chair
Jason SECONDED the motion.
The motion PASSED: 4 – 0.

Mark MOVED to elect Jason Hoover as Vice-Chair.
Seth SECONDED the motion.
The motion PASSED: 4 – 0.

Jason MOVED to elect Seth Jensen as Clerk.
Pat SECONDED the motion.
The motion PASSED: 4 – 0.

Discuss Current Projects

Melissa informed the Commission of the different projects going on in Town. Those projects mainly consisting of the Town Center Project which focuses on installing traffic calming measures and upgrading parking in the Town Center, creating a Capital Budget and Program to inventory the Town's capital assets and the replacement of those assets, and the Ancient Roads Project which consists of researching the Town road surveys to determine the location of the road described in each the deed. She also informed the Commission that the Selectboard would be conducting its first public hearing on the draft Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and draft Town Plan on November 20th.

Discuss Upcoming Projects

Town Plan Re-Write:

Melissa stated that the Planning Commission's main focus this coming year will be re-writing the Town Plan which is due to expire October 2009.

The Commission discussed a plan on how to pursue this endeavor. They asked Melissa to email the 2003 Town Plan survey and educational information to them in the coming weeks. After reviewing those materials, each commissioner will draft some potential survey questions or issues to be discussed at the next meeting.

Melissa presented the Commission with a list of issues/items the former Planning Commission, Selectboard, Conservation Commission, etc asked the new Commission to research when re-writing the Town Plan and Bylaws.

Mark thought the survey should cover each section of the Zoning and Subdivisions Regulations. Pat added that he could gather information on what makes an energy committee effective for the next meeting.

Seth suggested that the Commission get all Town boards and interested persons involved in the process of writing the survey and Town Plan early on. The Commission agreed to draft the survey and then ask for input from the Selectboard, Development Review Board and Conservation Commission prior to the survey being finalized. Furthermore, the Commission thought it a good idea to ask all Town committees for a list of proposed future projects so they can be listed in the Town Plan; The thought being this would help when applying for grant funding.

Seth stated that he would like to pursue work on the town center wastewater study. The Commission agreed that the study should be finalized. Therefore, they agreed that letters should be sent to property owners owning soils suitable for shared wastewater systems in hopes that they will be interested in sharing their wastewater capacity with other property owners who lack suitable soils. Seth said that he would draft a letter for the Commission to review at the next meeting before being sent to the Selectboard for review and approval.

Zoning & Subdivision Regulation Re-Write:

Melissa mentioned that the Selectboard asked that the Planning Commission think about doing annual re-writes of the regulations to lower fiscal costs due to noticing requirements and to allow more time to be spent focusing on a few issues as once as opposed to dealing with many issues at one time. The Commission stated that they weren't sure how they want to pursue further updates at this time and decided to discuss the matter after the update of the Town Plan is complete.

Pat MOVED to adjourn. Jason SECONDED the motion.
The motion PASSED: 4 - 0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:57 p.m.

Submitted by,
Melissa Manka, Planning Coordinator