

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minutes for November 19, 2008 Meeting
Approved on December 17, 2008

Commission Members Present: Mark Letorney (Chair), Seth Jensen, Patrick Haller, Jason Hoover and Michael Nelson.

Commission Members Absent: N/A

Also Present: Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator) and Debra Sachs

The meeting began at approximately 7:04p.m.

Presentation by Deborah Sachs : Town Energy Planning & Energy Committees:

Debra Sachs from Alliance for Climate Action was present to discuss the Town's options with regard to forming an energy committee. Debra explained that the town has three choices 1) create a Selectboard appointed energy committee 2) create a subcommittee of the Planning Commission 3) create an ad-hoc committee. She informed the Commission that the committee should consist of 5 – 7 people. She went on to explain that any newly formed energy committee should begin by creating a mission statement, creating a list of energy needs and resources, brainstorming possible projects and activities, pick a small/doable project and seek the support of town boards. Debra proceeded by giving a PowerPoint presentation on possible energy committee projects, which she supplied to the Commission.

2009 Town Plan Survey & Survey Maps:

The Planning Commission reviewed the Conservation Commission's, David Tilton's and Tony Kitsos's comments on the draft town plan survey and revised said document based on their feedback. The Planning Commission asked Melissa to revise the survey and provide the Commission with the revised draft survey for the next meeting. The Commission agreed that they would make final revisions, confirm the method and date of distribution, and determine the return date at their next meeting.

Draft Town Center Wastewater Capacity Inquiry Letter:

The Planning Commission will discuss this agenda item at their December 17, 2008 meeting.

Zoning & Subdivision Regulations Prohibiting the Development of Slopes 25% or Greater:

The Planning Commission will discuss this agenda item at their December 17, 2008 meeting.

Minutes of the October 15, 2008 Meeting:

The Planning Commission will discuss the October 15, 2008 meeting minutes at their December 17, 2008 meeting.

Other Business, Citizens to be Heard & Announcements:

Mark discussed the Commission's concern regarding whether farm-based manufacturing should be allowed in town if it does not fall under the State's definition of agriculture. Mark confirmed that agricultural manufacturing establishments are not exempt under State statute if said establishment imports more than 50% of their raw materials. He informed the group that agricultural-manufacturing businesses that were not exempt under State regulation would fall under local commercial zoning regulations. He then discussed the fact that the town's commercial zoning language is quite limited. Therefore, Mark asked the Commission whether they would like to review the commercial businesses regulations to ensure that the town allows and prohibits the types of commercial development which will preserve the character and vision of Westford. The Commission agreed and Mark asked the Commission to create a list of businesses that are in keeping with the character of the town and those that are not for the next meeting. He reiterated that the Commission should keep in mind business types, square footage, traffic, footprints and the site plan regulations in general when reviewing allowed and conditional commercial uses.

Mark stated that he would like the Commission to invite Suzanne Blanchard, CCRPC representative, to a Planning Commission meeting to discuss current regional and local activities.

Seth MOVED to adjourn. Pat SECONDED the motion.
The motion PASSED: 5 - 0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:09 p.m.

Submitted by,
Melissa Manka, Planning Coordinator