

**TOWN OF WESTFORD**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Minutes for May 6, 2009 Meeting**  
Approved on May 20, 2009

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

**Commission Members Absent:** Jason Hoover

**Also Present:** Nanette Rogers

The meeting began at approximately 7:02 p.m.

**Draft Community Survey Summary**

The Planning Commission reviewed the survey summary. They will approve the summary after all the surveys have been returned and counted, which should be before the next meeting.

**Town Plan Re-Write**

Greenways & Trails

The Planning Commission is waiting for information from the Conservation Commission.

Economic Development

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft language. They would like to create better definitions for small scale industry and commerce, as well as keeping them separate within the Plan.

The Commission discussed how to promote commercial development but also contain development in appropriate areas. Ideas included limiting number of trips with the exception of Routes 128 and 15 and the Town Center District, and including design and energy requirements. Pat will check the State commercial code to see if it can be formulated to fit Westford. Seth suggested requiring a predisaster plan and water supply for large commercial developments. Mark would like language to support growth of existing businesses. Pat is concerned that if an existing business that was fine with neighbors grows, the neighbors may not like the “new” business. Seth feels the Commission needs to define what type of business is allowed in districts.

Pat amended the policy section language regarding the town green and including small retail shops.

Mike Nelson would like to amend the language regarding the reference to “an abundance of agricultural lands” because he feels that a lot of the land is not farmable due to steep slopes and other natural barriers. The Commission will provide a reference point or comparison to clarify abundance.

Pat amended the language with regard to “contribute to the well being of existing agriculture businesses”.

Pat would like to include the attraction of the school. It provides strong community ties, creates a higher tax base and property values and is a component when people are deciding where to live. The other commissioners agreed. Pat will work on the language.

Conditional use language will be revised to control where structures are located when single develop of agricultural lands occurs to ensure it is not built on prime agriculture land.

The language for establishment of a town center wastewater system was amended to facilitate development of small scale commerce.

The language for signs needs to be cleaned up.

The Commission would like the Energy Committee to look at 3 phase power to see if/how it can be brought to Westford.

### Housing

The Commission discussed the need to have diversified language with regard to housing. Seth will obtain more accurate numbers as well as creating graphs to be included. The Commission agreed that the terms should be clearly defined (such as elderly housing).

The Commission discussed whether there should be incentives for duplexes versus single family dwellings to promote affordable housing and density. They need to define high growth areas:

Town Center, Plains road and possibly AFRIL.

Seth will research the inventory of town owned land. If feasible, the information will be included.

#### Goals:

- Bonuses: share infrastructure within Town Center District; lot coverage bonus for commercial development; combination of commercial/residential uses
- Fees: structure fee schedule to subsidize application fees for developments that provide affordable housing
- Energy & conserving agricultural land: implement design standards; control location of structures on prime agricultural land; energy efficient structures; Certificate of Occupancy contingent on filing of energy certificate

Seth will amend language and provide new draft.

### Transportation

Pat will have language for the next meeting.

### **Planning Commission Work Plan**

The work plan will be reviewed at the next meeting.

### **Minutes of the April 15, 2009 Meeting**

The minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

### **Planning Commission Newsletter Articles**

Pat will write an article for the June Newsletter. The article will be circulated to the commissioners the week before the newsletter deadline. The Commission decided to rotate writing articles for future newsletters.

Mark Letorney MOVED to adjourn. Pat SECONDED the motion.  
The motion PASSED: 3 - 0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 p.m.

Submitted by,  
Nanette Rogers