

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minutes for October 21, 2009 Meeting
Approved on October November 18, 2009

Commission Members Present: Mark Letorney (Chair), Gordon Gebauer, Patrick Haller, Jason Hoover, and Seth Jensen (7:09 pm).

Commission Members Absent: N/A

Also Present: Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator).

The meeting began at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Draft 2009 Town Plan, Maps & Public Hearing

Gordon suggested a few minor changes on Page 7, Page 16 and in the definition of “designated open space”.

Melissa was asked to send Mark the finalized Town Plan maps so he could develop a PowerPoint presentation for the public hearing.

Mark and Pat agreed to present the major Town Plan changes at the public hearing.

The Commission agreed to provide 11” by 17” maps to residents at the public hearing and to have larger copies on the PowerPoint. This will save a significant amount of money due to the cost of printing full size maps, especially when the maps are still in draft form.

Melissa will see if she can borrow a projector and screen from the school.

Draft Steep Slope Regulations

The Planning Commissioners expressed concern that specifying certain regulations cannot be waived might be interpreted as saying other regulations are more easily waived. The Commission would like to have leeway to evaluate each application individually and make a decision accordingly. Melissa explained that the Town Attorney suggested we add language listing regulations which in no case can be waived to make the intent of the regulation very black and white in the court of law. The Commission asked Melissa to discuss their concerns with the Town Attorney. The Commission would also like the DRB to review the language prior to their next meeting.

Draft Development Fee Structure

The Planning Commission briefly reviewed the proposed fee increases. Seth commented that the language used in the Zoning Certification should be evaluated to ensure it does not pose a liability to the Town. Also, the Commission agreed that the Selectboard should reevaluate whether to post legal notices in Seven Days as opposed to the Burlington Free Press due to the significant cost difference. Seth will write a formal letter to the Selectboard from the Planning Commission regarding the Commission’s stance.

DHCA – Village Center Designation

The Planning Commission discussed possible boundaries for the “designated village” and decided to include the area immediately surrounding the Town Common, including all multifamily dwellings and excluding the rear portions of the Pigeon and Fleury lots. However, they asked Melissa to look into whether the area could be expanded in the future. Seth suggested

that we ask the Selectboard to approve the application while granting Melissa the ability to make an administrative amendment based on the Downtown Board's recommendations.

Other Business, Citizens to be Heard & Announcements.

Town Center Wastewater Project:

Seth and Mark will set up a meeting with the White Church and Red Brick Meeting House in November to discuss the Town Center Wastewater Project and will report back to the Commission.

Planning Commission Work Plan

The Planning Commission reviewed the work plan and asked Melissa to revise it as discussed.

Minutes of the October 7, 2009 Meeting

Pat MOVED to approve the minutes.

Gordon SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 4 – 0.

Jason abstained

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:06 p.m.

Submitted by,
Melissa Manka, Planning Coordinator