

May 6, 2003

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mrs. Averill, Mr. Bender, Mr. Byerly, Mr. Charles

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mr. Rimsky, Mrs. Roberts

MEMBER ABSENT: Mr. Buck

ALTERNATE ABSENT: Mr. Sabin

STAFF PRESENT Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Luckey, Mr. Wood

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Millington

Regular Business

Mr. Bender called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and seated Members Averill, Bender, and Byerly and Alternates Rimsky and Roberts for Mr. Buck and Mr. Charles.

Consideration of the Minutes

MOTION: To accept the 4/1/03 Regular Meeting minutes as written. By Mrs. Roberts, seconded by Mrs. Averill, and passed 5-0.

The 4/15/03 Special Meeting minutes were accepted as amended. Mrs. Roberts pointed out two places on page 3 where it was stated a commissioner had "complained." In the fourth bullet this was changed to "regretted" and further down the page in the paragraph following the bullets, this was changed to "suggested."

MOTION: To accept the 4/15/03 Special Meeting minutes as amended. By Mr. Byerly, seconded by Mrs. Averill, and passed 5-0.

MOTION: To include subsequent business not already posted on the agenda. By Mrs. Averill, seconded by Mr. Byerly, and passed 5-0.

Other Business

Plan of Conservation and Development

Mr. Wood, consultant, distributed a 6 page memo dated 5/6/03, which included a redraft of Section 1 based on the discussion that took place at the last meeting. Mr. Wood stressed this was not an attempt to solve all issues or an entire rewrite, but addressed some of the major points raised at the last meeting. The Commissioners took a few minutes to read the memo.

Mr. Charles was seated for Mr. Rimsky at 7:42 p.m.

Mr. Bender said he had consulted with Mr. Wood concerning the difficult process of reviewing the draft Plan. He suggested that instead of Planimetrics writing the next draft based on discussions that have taken place at the Commission meetings, he meet with Mr. Wood, Mrs. Hill, and one other Planning Commissioner, all who are more familiar with Planning's ideas and feelings, to decide what should be said and how it should be written. Mr. Bender noted comments from Mr. Martin, Zoning Chairman and Mrs. Payne, Conservation Chairman, had to be taken into consideration and said he had a substantial number of modifications to make in the language, emphasis, presentation, and specificity of the draft. In general, the Commissioners agreed with Mr. Bender's suggestion, although Mr. Charles thought it would be more effective if the entire Commission first went through the draft once with Mr. Wood and then turned it over to the proposed subcommittee.

Mr. Wood thought some basic decisions should be made to facilitate the work of the subcommittee. These were 1) how the draft would be organized and 2) which categories should be presented in their own chapters. He said work to redraft the Plan could continue while Planimetrics prepared an outline for a public presentation. The purpose of this presentation would be to generate discussion and solicit ideas from the public and would most likely be scheduled for June. Planimetrics would then continue to meet with the Commission during the summer to further refine the Plan and a public hearing would be scheduled for September.

Mr. Wood discussed the reorganization of the Plan. Based on comments made by the Commission at the last meeting, he said he would consolidate the sections on history, trends, and facts and refocus the first chapters. Once the Commission had agreed on which goals it would prioritize, he said each category would have a separate section, which would include the reasons the issue was being addressed, strategies, tables, and specific conclusions. Mr. Wood asked if he should continue with the work he had begun in his memo, but Mr. Bender thought there should be a work session with the subcommittee before he invested more time in a rewrite.

Incorporating the Natural Resource Inventory Report and the Open Space Steering Committee Report was discussed. It was noted these had been adopted by the Commission in motions approved at its 12/4/01 meeting. Mr. Wood did not recommend that these reports be printed in their entirety, but said they should be referenced in the Plan and included in the appendix so that it was clear they were taken seriously and applied throughout. Mr. Bender instructed Mr. Wood to word the final formal resolution re: adoption of the Plan of Conservation and Development by the Planning Commission so that it would be clear to the public that it incorporates these documents. Mr. Charles noted the Open Space Interim Report had not been adopted by the Planning Commission and so did not share the same status as the NRIR and OPSCR referenced above. Mr. Bender said a precise list of external documents to be incorporated in the Plan would be decided at a future meeting.

Mr. Rimsky agreed to serve with Mr. Bender on the subcommittee. A meeting was scheduled for Friday, May 9 at 10:00 a.m.

The blue strategy pages were discussed. Mr. Bender thought they should be included in the appendix. Mr. Wood said strategies relevant to each section would be listed at the end of each and a full list would be included in the appendix. He suggested the list in the appendix could be tear out sheets that could be used by the Town boards for the implementation phase of the Plan. He also said he had reviewed the recommendations from the 1993 Plan to determine which had not yet been implemented. Mr. Charles thought the strategy pages would be a helpful tool to use when the next update is done in 2013. Mr. Wood said their inclusion would help to ensure the Plan is implemented after its adoption.

It was agreed the four major categories of the Plan, preservation of rural character, enhancement of village centers, guidance for residential development, and other issues were appropriate.

Establishing and funding an open space acquisition fund was discussed. Mr. Wood recommended consideration of a half mil assessment and of low interest bonding as possible means of raising money for the open space fund. The goal would be to have enough money set aside so that valuable parcels could be acquired as they become available. It was noted the half mil proposal would be included in the Plan. Mr. Wood noted as soon as the Town has funds available there will be people lobbying for the purchase of various parcels. He said that is the reason an open space acquisition plan, which clearly lists criteria and priorities is important. He also recommended a committee be established to identify parcels the Town should acquire, to begin negotiations to acquire them, and to seek the necessary funding from the Town and/or various partnerships. Mr. Bender recommended the Plan include a recommendation for the establishment of such a committee.

Privilege of the Floor

Mr. Millington said he admired the Commission's work on its difficult task of updating the Plan. He thought a goal of 30% open space in Town was a good one. Regarding housing, he said he had noticed a lot of attention given to elderly housing, but no provisions for limited equity housing for young adults. Mr. Rimsky also thought the housing issue had not been adequately addressed.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. By Mrs. Roberts.

Mr. Bender adjourned the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

Janet M. Hill
Land Use Coordinator