

July 25, 2003

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

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mr. Rimsky, Mr. Sabin

MEMBER ABSENT: Mr. Buck

ALTERNATE ABSENT: Mrs. Roberts

TOWN STAFF AND COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mrs. J. Hill, Mr. Wood, Mrs. Luckey, Mr. Owen, Mr. LaMuniere, Mr. Markert, Mr. Field, Mrs. D. Hill, Ms. Page, Mr. Smith, Mr. Solley, Mr. Martin, Mr. Lyon, Mr. Bedini

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Cornett, Mr. Mustich, Mrs. Bedini, Mrs. Materne, Mrs. McDonald, Ms. King, Mrs. Hardee, Mrs. E. Charles, Mrs. Addicks, Mrs. Duus, Mr. and Mrs. Klein, Atty. and Mrs. Fairbairn, Mr. Sears, Mr. Millington, Mrs. Talbot, Mr. Brigham, Mr. and Mrs. Minor, Mr. Hubblebank, Mr. and Mrs. A. Chapin, Other Residents, Press

Mr. Bender called the Special Meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and briefly described the process to update the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Mr. Wood, consultant from Planimetrics, gave a slide presentation on the draft Plan. This included the four main objectives of the plan, to preserve rural character, to enhance the village centers, to guide and manage housing development, and other issues such as town roads, community facilities and community spirit and the key strategies to achieve them. The outline of the presentation is attached.

Questions and comments from the public were taken.

A man noted the Plan focused on Washington and asked to what degree it addressed incursions from adjoining towns that have fundamentally different characters from our own. Mr. Bender noted Washington regulations apply only within our own boundaries, but noted towns such as New Milford had been making strides to improve their land use regulations.

Another resident noted the Board of Education had hired a consultant to study the feasibility of consolidating the primary schools and asked what the impact on Town would be if the primary school was no longer located in the Depot. Mr. Bender noted the Plan recommends the school property be placed in the Depot Business District and pointed out Zoning would have control over potential uses of the building. The resident saw the potential for derelict buildings and so thought the property's proposed inclusion in the business district was appropriate.

Atty. Fairbairn, member of the Open Space Steering Committee, asked that before the Commission adopts the Conservation Commission's Open Space Plan, it give the Open Space Steering Committee the opportunity to find out why that report differs so dramatically from the Open Space Steering Committee's Report or that it adopt the original Steering Committee's Report into the Plan as well. Mr. Bender said the differences in the two reports should be resolved by the Steering Committee and Conservation Commission and that only one report would be adopted by the Planning Commission for inclusion in the Plan. A lengthy exchange followed between Atty. Fairbairn and Mr. Field, author of the Conservation Commission's Open Space Report. Atty. Fairbairn argued the Steering Committee had been broad based and so it was not right that the Conservation Commission had ignored its recommendations. Mr. Field responded it had not been ignored and that he was confident the differences could be resolved. Mr. Martin, Zoning Commission Chairman, agreed with Atty. Fairbairn that there are legitimate issues to be resolved and said because the Planning Commission would incorporate one of the documents into the Plan, this was a planning issue. He thought it would be helpful if the Planning Commission would schedule a meeting with all interested parties to iron out the differences between the reports. Mr. Bender

again stated Planning would not incorporate two open space reports with conflicting provisions and that it recommended the Steering Committee and Conservation Commission work out their differences on their own. Mr. Sabin agreed with Mr. Field that Conservation's Open Space Plan could accommodate the views of all the concerned parties. Mr. Bender noted the Commission would discuss this issue at its next meeting. Mr. Field stated again, it had been his intention to follow the intent of both the Natural Resources Inventory Report and the Open Space Steering Committee Report.

Mr. Bender thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the Special Meeting at 8:50 p.m.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL Respectfully submitted,

Janet M. Hill, LU Coordinator