

January 3, 2012

7:30 p.m. Land Use Meeting Room

Members Present: Ms. Roberts, Mr. Frank, Ms. Gager, Ms. Jahnke

Members Absent: Mr. Rimsky,

Alternates Present: Mr. Carey, Ms. Braverman, Mr. Osborne

Alternates Absent:

Staff Present: Ms. White, Ms. Hill

Also Present:

Ms. Roberts called the Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Seated: Roberts, Frank, Gager, Jahnke, Osborne, Alt.

Consideration of the Minutes

Regular Meeting of 12-6-11

The Commission considered the minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission on December 6, 2011.

Corrections:

Page 2:

Last sentence:

The Commission agreed that the Depot Study and the Natural Resource Inventory Report should be incorporated in to the revised POCD.

Page 3

: 1st paragraph, under Revision of the Subdivision Regulations should read:

Mr. Franks stated that there had been a change in the State statutes effective last October with respect to the security, which may be required by the Town to assure completion of the public improvements to be made in a proposed subdivision. While our present regulation permits surety bonds for a portion of such security, the new statutory requirement mandates terms, which are less favorable to the Town. Mr. Connors has recommended that our surety bond provisions be eliminated and replaced with a provision for "conditional approval", filed on the land records, specifying that no individual lots may be sold or transferred until the required public improvements are completed and approved by the Town.

1st sentence under Administrative Business:

Ms. Roberts stated that she has a concern that a newly elected selectman, Mr. Carey, is ...

Motion

to accept the December 6, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Planning Commission as amended,

by Ms. Gager, seconded by Ms. Jahnke, passed by 5-0 vote.

New Applications

There were no new applications to consider.

Other Business

Update re: Available Grants with the First Selectman:

Ms. Hill stated that she spoke with First Selectman Lyon and he said that there are three towns interested in the grant and he has been working with Mr. Smith, Highway Director, on the figures. She stated that the grant will be discussed at the next NWCOG's meeting on Thursday January 5, 2012 and depending on how many Towns are interested the Council of Governments will be meeting later this month.

Plan of Conservation and Development

Chapter 5 – Housing Development

Encourage Conservation Subdivision Design –

Ms. Roberts stated that she was not sure that the Zoning Regulations provide adequate flexibility for conservation subdivisions. Ms. Hill stated that she spoke with Mr. Connor and that he suggested that the criteria for a subdivision in the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations be revised to encourage conservation subdivisions. The Commission agreed that they should ask a consultant how other town's land use regulations are encouraging this type of development. Mr. Carey stated that he feels that the revision should be condensed, concise and updated to modern standards and suggested to the Commission that they look at the Town of Roxbury's revised POCD.

Evaluate Zoning Regulations

Ms. Gager volunteered to look at the other town(s) regulations that use soil based zoning and compare them to the Town of Washington's. Ms. Hill stated that some people argue that such large lot sizes keep the young families out of Washington. Ms. Roberts stated that keeping the young people in town is a concern but no one has figured out a way to make it affordable for them.

Mr. Carey stated that the present POCD does not include an economic development plan and that he has received feedback from other residents that the revised plan should include an economic development section. Ms. Roberts stated that this is not required but the Planning Commission is considering addressing economic development in the revised POCD. Mr. Frank stated that he thinks that the State Statute does require that the POCD "have a plan B.A. Statement of policies, goals and standards for the economic development of the municipality" even though the Town has not included this in the past. Ms. Gager stated that the Commission has discussed asking the Board of Selectmen to consider creating a commission that would look at economic development and the revised POCD would include a list of recommendations of what could be done to help facilitate future economic development. Mr. Frank stated that he feels that the residents are looking for a strong statement of direction in the revised POCD.

Mr. Carey suggested that the Planning Commission inform residents of the main issues of focus and the fact that this is a revision of the POCD so that they have a format for discussion at the individual village meetings. Ms. Roberts stated that she thought this was a good idea but would like the Planning Commission to finish the review and meet with a consultant to answer the questions that the Commission has and then inform the community and request their input before finalizing the revisions.

Mr. Frank asked if the Zoning Commission considered revisions to the Zoning Regulations regarding increased frontage requirements and residential bulk. Ms. Hill stated that they did revise

building height and the commercial district setbacks. The Commission discussed residential setback regulations.

Promote Housing for a Diverse Community –

Ms. Roberts stated that the economy could improve and the Town should be prepared. Ms. Jahnke stated that the Housing Committee is in flux at the moment due to some resignations. The Commission agreed that they should talk to a consultant about what some of the options are and what other towns are doing. Ms. Gager stated she feels the Town would want to avoid community septic if it can be avoided because it could turn out to be a liability to the Town. The Commission agreed that further discussion with a consultant and the Housing Commission would be needed before any recommendations are made regarding housing diversity strategies. Ms. Gager volunteered to look into whether there is a line item in the budget for a Housing Land Fund.

Ms. Hill stated that the Zoning Regulations do not allow for condominiums unless they are for affordable housing. Ms. Roberts stated that she feels that there is a great deal of opposition in Town to condominiums. The Commission decided to talk to a consultant regarding housing for the elderly. There was a brief discussion regarding Bee Brook Condominiums. Ms. Hill volunteered to look in to the history of the Bee Brook Condominiums. Mr. Carey suggested that this type of construction should be referred to “common wall construction.”

Ms. Roberts stated that the PC has already discussed incorporating the Natural Resources Inventory Report into the POCD.

The Commission agreed that they would look further into the concept of developing denser village centers and would research examples of other village centers in Connecticut. There was a brief discussion regarding the vacant gas station building/lot.

Ms. Gager submitted an estimated budget for consultant support for 2012 (attached). She stated that a budget for consultant support in 2013 would also be needed. There was a brief discussion regarding existing funds.

The Commission will review Chapter 6 – Address Other Community Issues at the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting on February 7, 2012.

Ms. Braverman stated that she was invited to attend the Conservation Commission Meeting tomorrow, January 4, 2012 but would not be able to attend. She stated that the CC have accomplished a lot of their goals from the Implementation section of the POCD and that the Planning Commission is still in the midst of this review and would prefer to meet with the CC after the review is finished. The Commission agreed that they welcome the Conservation Commission’s input and appreciate their efforts with communication between the two commissions.

Revision of the Subdivision Regulations

Ms. Hill stated that she would ask Town Counsel what they have advised other towns to do regarding the surety bond statutory change.

Administrative Business

Ms. Roberts stated that the Commission normally votes for officers of the Planning Commission in

the January Meetings.

Mr. Frank nominated the currently elected officers remain in their positions. Ms. Jahnke seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Adjournment

Motion:

to adjourn at 8:41 pm

by Ms. Jahnke, seconded by Ms. Roberts, passed by 5-0 vote.

Ms. Roberts adjourned the meeting.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley White, Land Use Clerk