

February 7, 2012

7:30 p.m. Land Use Meeting Room

Members Present: Ms. Roberts, Mr. Frank, Mr. Rimsky,

Members Absent: Ms. Gager, Ms. Jahnke

Alternates Present: Mr. Carey, Ms. Braverman

Alternates Absent: Mr. Osborne

Staff Present: Ms. White, Ms. Hill

Also Present: Chris Charles

Ms. Roberts called the Meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Seated: Roberts, Frank, Rimsky, Carey, Alt., Braverman, Alt.

Consideration of the Minutes

Regular Meeting of 1-3-12

The Commission considered the minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission on January 3, 2012.

Corrections:

Page 2:

Under : Plan of Conservation and Development, 3rd Paragraph, sentence beginning with Mr. Frank should read: Mr. Frank stated that he thinks that the State Statute does require that the POCD "shall be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the economic development of the municipality"...

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

Motion

to accept the January 3, 2012 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Planning Commission as amended, by Mr. Frank, seconded by Ms. Roberts, passed by 5-0 vote.

New Applications

There were no new applications to consider.

Other Business

Available Grants:

Ms. Hill stated that she spoke with First Selectman Lyon and he said that the possibility of the Town of Washington receiving the grant from the NWCOG looks promising and that if the Town is chosen as one of the recipients of the grant the improvements would not be able to start until this time next year (2013). Ms. Hill stated that Mr. Charles asked that the Town make sure that the septic capabilities of the Depot are not impacted by whatever the Town decides to do with this grant. Mr. Carey submitted an article from the Economist about the possible revival of Britain's

High Streets. Ms. Roberts read an excerpt from the article.

Plan of Conservation and Development:

The Commission considered the draft letter to Prospective Consultants, from Adelaide Roberts, dated 2-7-12. Ms. Hill asked the Commissioners if they had any comments or corrections regarding the letter. Mr. Carey stated that he read the Town of Roxbury's Plan of Conservation and Development. He stated that Chris Wood rewrote the plan and it cost \$12,000.00. The Commissioner's discussed the estimated cost of hiring a planner. Ms. Hill stated that the job would have to go out to bid if it is over \$6,000.00 and she suggested that the advertisement run in the Hartford Courant for two consecutive Sundays. She stated that she would also send the letter directly to the 6 consultants that have previously worked with the Town. Mr. Frank suggested that the job opening notice be sent to professional organizations of town planners. Ms. Hill stated that she would look into how that had been handled in the past.

The Commission discussed that all of the POCD does not need to be rewritten and some areas need only new numbers and updating. Ms. Hill and the Commission discussed a time frame that they could work with. She stated that the sooner the Town gets the responses the sooner the Planning Commission would know how to budget for the revision of the POCD. Ms. Roberts stated that the cost could vary due to the fact that it does not need to be totally rewritten and that the Town has four villages at which it is contemplated that separate community meetings might be held. Mr. Carey stated that he would bring it to the attention of the Selectmen at the next Selectmen's Meeting on Thursday February 9, 2012.

The Commission continued its review of the 2003 POCD:

Chapter 6 - Address Other Community Issues:

Major Facility and Service Needs & Ongoing Facility Service Improvements:

The Commission decided that they should request feedback from the Selectmen on how to address these items in the revision.

Adequate Facilities and Services:

The Commission stated that they feel that the decrease in the population of the school system should be addressed. Mr. Carey stated that this is a statewide issue. Mr. Rimsky stated that the Town should consider what is needed to ensure the health and continuity of the private institutions as well. Ms. Hill stated that this is a question that each candidate for consultant could be asked in his or her interview. She stated that she feels that addressing the issues of economics and housing diversity are interrelated with the school population issue.

Maintain Town Roads:

Mr. Carey stated that road maintenance is a major part of the Town's budget and that it may be prudent for the Town to abandon certain parts of roads but taking care not to 'land lock' any property owners. The Commission agreed that they would talk to the planning consultant regarding this issue.

Consider Possible Future Utility Needs:

The Commission agrees that they should seek the advice of a consultant concerning how to address the septic feasibility in the more densely populated areas (village centers).

Continue Cooperation with Private Educational Institutions :

The Commission had a brief discussion regarding the Private Schools' need for growth.

Continue to Address Telecommunications Issues :

Mr. Carey stated that AT&T's representatives have responded to the Town's requests for modification of lease terms, noting that there are two items that are not negotiable. He stated that the Town needs to decide whether they want the cell tower at the Town Garage site or not. Ms. Hill recommended that the Planning Commission consult with the Cell Tower Subcommittee regarding this section of the POCD. Mr. Rimsky stated that the Town has different needs in this area than it did ten years ago. Ms. Braverman stated that not having cell service does put the emergency workers at a disadvantage. The Commission briefly discussed RF emissions. The Commission agreed that this section could be shortened but still continue to express that the cell towers should only be located at well thought out sites.

Maintain and Enhance Community Spirit:

Mr. Rimsky stated that he feels that the Town should communicate with the community on a more consistent basis regarding activities and events and have a more positive outreach by the municipality in its various functions. He stated that there should be more of an inter- relationship between the business community and various elements of the municipality, and be more inclusive as a town. Ms. Roberts stated that what Mr. Rimsky is suggesting is that this first paragraph gets rewritten to express that there is a need to enhance the communication between the Town, its businesses and its residents. Mr. Rimsky volunteered to draft a first outline/paragraph for this section.

Street Lights:

Ms. White stated that the Conservation Commission has submitted a proposal to the Selectmen's Office to eliminate unneeded lights on Town roads and that they have asked for the State Trooper's input but have not received it yet. She stated that the First Selectman has offered to look into it. Mr. Carey stated that there is a \$28,000.00 line item in the budget for street lighting and is being reviewed. He stated that the Town must contact the utility company to have them take down lights that are no longer wanted and that the existing streetlights do not meet Zoning Regulations. Mr. Carey stated that someone should talk to residents who live near the lights to see which are wanted and which ones could be removed and this would decrease the amount of money the Town spends on energy for lighting. Ms. Hill stated that the POCD should recommend that unnecessary streetlights be removed.

The Commission will review Chapter 7:

Implementation at the March 6, 2012 Regular Planning Commission Meeting at 7:30 in the Land Use Meeting Room at Bryan Memorial Town Hall.

Privilege of the Floor

Mr. Charles stated that he is happy that the flood plain map is finished. Mr. Carey stated that they are complete and should be delivered this week to the Selectmen's Office. Mr. Charles stated that he saw some sketches for the improvements to Bryan Memorial Plaza and that he is concerned about the installation of catch basins, which would compromise the use of the land for Health Department or septic issues. He stated that he thinks it is important that the Town completes or pursues the septic/sewer analysis for the Depot before it does any installations that involve catch basins. Mr. Charles stated that additional parking could be arranged without spending money on catch basins and sidewalks and he does not feel that the Town should install these structures until it knows the outcome of the analysis.

Mr. Charles referred the Commission to a couple of Connecticut groups that are working on sustainable development and a book called The Third Industrial Revolution, by Jeremy Rifkin. He stated that he felt this would be helpful information for the Planning Commission.

Administrative Business

Ms. Hill distributed an announcement from the Northwestern Connecticut Council of Governments for a Meeting concerning the State Plan of Conservation and Development, on Wednesday, February 29, 2012 from 7 pm to 8:30 pm at Warren Town Hall, 50 Cemetery Road, Warren, CT. Several Commissioners stated that they intended to attend.

Adjournment

Motion: to adjourn at 9:00 pm by Mr. Carey, seconded by Mr. Frank, passed by 5-0 vote.

Ms. Roberts adjourned the meeting.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley White, Land Use Clerk