

October 17, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Charles, Mr. Frank, Ms. Gager, Mr. Rimsky, Mrs. Roberts

ALTERNATE PRESENT: Mr. Carey

ALTERNATES ABSENT: Mrs. Braverman, Mr. Fowlkes

STAFF PRESENT: Mrs. Hill

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Sears, Press

Mrs. Roberts called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m. and seated Members Charles, Frank, Gager, Rimsky, and Roberts.

Referral Under CGS 8-24/Installation of Generator at Town Hall

Mrs. Roberts read the 10/6/06 letter from Mr. Sears to the Commission, which provided information that had been requested by the Commission at its 10/3/06 meeting about the proposed generator.

Mr. Charles asked if a Honda generator system that would be installed inside the building and generate heat and electricity had been considered. He said such a system would explore federal energy generation/distribution mandates and set a townwide precedent for quiet and efficient technology. Mr. Sears responded that while that was a good idea, such a system would be very expensive. He said the Town would be reusing a fully functional generator that it would be getting for a very low price to serve both the Town Hall and old firehouse. He said at this time the Town had no long range plans for improvements to the heating system. He also noted the installation of the generator on the north side of the Town Hall would replace the existing generator so that space in the old firehouse could be used to house police vehicles.

The Commissioners raised several questions: 1) Had noise been addressed? Mr. Sears said the generator would be housed in a sound deadening metal enclosure. Ms. Gager suggested the weekly test run should not be conducted during Town Hall business hours as the noise would be annoying. 2) Were the installation of the generator and the required trenching proposed in the floodplain? It was the general opinion that the floodplain did not extend to the Town Hall, but Mr. Sears said he would find out. 3) Who designed the system? Mr. Sears said it was done by a certified electrician. 4) How old was the generator and did it have a guarantee? Mr. Sears will find out. 5) How large was the propane tank and exactly where would it be placed? Mr. Sears pointed out a general area on the site plan, but said at this time he did not know the exact location. 6) Who would be responsible for its maintenance? The building and grounds manager would be the person responsible. 7) Did the generator include nozzles? Mr. Sears will find out. 8) Would the installation of either the generator or the propane tank interfere with any potential future plans for senior housing, extension of the driveway, or parking? Mr. Sears said they would not. 9) Since the generator would enable the Town Hall to be used as an emergency shelter, would the Town qualify for a grant from the Department of Homeland Security? Mr. Sears said he would look into this.

Mr. Charles said he had no confidence in the design proposed because a comprehensive study to address future needs had not been conducted. The other commissioners were generally in favor of the installation. Ms. Gager recommended the concrete pad be made large enough to accommodate a larger generator if needed in the future and the entire area be screened, not just the generator.

MOTION: To approve the installation of a generator on the north side of Bryan Memorial Town Hall per

Mr. Sears' 10/6/06 letter subject to the receipt of satisfactory responses to the questions raised at the 10/17/06 Special Meeting. By Ms. Gager, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, and passed 4-1.

Mr. Charles voted No because he thought a comprehensive study should be completed by the Town before energy needs are addressed on a current need basis.

Depot Study

Mrs. Roberts noted the Selectmen had requested a list of priorities for the Depot. After a lengthy discussion, the following list was agreed upon.

1. River Loop Property Walking Trail.

The Town should move forward to prepare this site for passive recreation as soon as possible.

It can put in the trail before the clean up of the entire property is completed.

This is the item the public listed as a top priority and the item that can be accomplished in the least amount of time with the least amount of funds.

2. Engineering Study and Plan for Bryan Plaza and Surrounding Area.

The Phase I plan by Wilbur Smith is a good starting point.

In addition to the study, feedback should be obtained from the other land use commissions.

Maintaining the flow of traffic around and through the Plaza should be included in the study.

A continuous driveway around Town Hall should be considered.

The traffic problems at the entrances/exits intersecting with the Plaza must be addressed.

Pedestrian access must be preserved.

The pedestrian crosswalks may have to be relocated. There should be a crosswalk going straight across from the Plaza to the Supply.

The study should include a survey of the thoroughfares, buildings, parking areas, and sidewalks and a report on how they all relate.

Parking needs must be addressed in context with the rest of the Depot.

3. Implementation of Traffic Calming Measures for Routes 47 and 109.

The consulting firm will draft a plan possibly including surfaced crosswalks, village entrance signs, trees, parallel parking, and other measures and then take the plan to the DOT for consideration.

The Selectmen would contact our state representative at this point to help with the DOT negotiations.

Railings (at the very least) should be installed along the outside of the walkways over the two Shepaug bridges to visually narrow the highway and slow the traffic entering the Depot.

4. Pedestrian Bridge Across the Shepaug River to River Road.

The more we orient the Town to people and to the river, the more we can get away from the focus on cars.

Finding out the cost of a bridge is a priority so the Town will know if it is, indeed, feasible.

In addition to listing the above priorities, the Commission made the following points:

- The above priorities need not be done sequentially; there is no reason they can't be undertaken simultaneously.
- The Commission favors retaining Wilbur Smith Associates as the consulting firm.
- The Planning Commission is not responsible for the implementation of the plan, but it needs to be part of the implementation process, working with both Wilbur Smith and the Board of Selectmen to provide direction.
- Although there are additional goals, the Commission decided not to prioritize them at this point. It wanted a manageable list to begin the implementation process.
- Field work will be needed in the future to determine whether there are areas for viable septic systems in the Depot. The River Loop Property, Primary School property, and Town Hall lawn areas are examples of the sites that could be considered. The septic field work would be part of the larger comprehensive plan for the Depot.

Rural Roadscape Zone/Referral from the Conservation Commission

Mrs. Roberts read Section 1; Purpose, of the 7/5/06 draft. It was noted Mrs. Hill had circulated a preliminary critique at the last meeting. The Commissioners asked:

- Is it possible to define traditional New England character? In addition, it was noted Rossiter architecture is not a typical New England style, but is an important part of Washington's character.
- Should the district be defined as the area within 25 ft. of the center of all public roads? Since the width of right of ways differ and the roads were not all placed in the middle of each right of way, it was thought some other standard measure was needed.
- Can a rural roadscape zone be legally established? The Commissioners asked if the Town Attorney had reviewed the proposal.
- Is the purpose of the proposed zone to take the place of the Scenic Road Ordinance, to supplement it, or what?

Mr. Frank suggested the Conservation Commission be asked to make a presentation at the next Planning Commission meeting and it was agreed this was a good idea. Mr. Carey asked that Mrs. Hill's 10/3/06 review be forwarded to the Conservation Commission.

Procedure for Approval of Conservation Easement for Upper Church Hill, LLC.

Mrs. Hill explained when the Commission had acted on this subdivision last spring, it had conditioned approval upon Town approval of the conservation easement, not realizing that Town Ordinance #730 gave the Planning Commission the authority to approve the easement itself. Therefore, once the final language is received, the easement will be sent to the Town Attorney for review, and the Commission

will vote to accept it or accept it with revisions at a subsequent meeting.

Mrs. Roberts noted no other business could be discussed because it had not been listed on the agenda for the Special Meeting.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. By Mr. Frank.

Mrs. Roberts adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

Janet M. Hill

Land Use Coordinator