

April 7, 2009

Regular Meeting
7:30 pm, Land Use Meeting Room

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

Members Absent: Ms. Jahnke

Alternates Present: Mr. Carey, Mr. Fowlkes

Staff Present: Janet Hill, Shelley White

Also Present: Ms. Cheney, Mr. Charles, Mr. Pappas

Ms. Roberts called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm and seated members Frank, Gager, Rimsky, Alternate Carey and herself.

Consideration of the Minutes

The regular meeting minutes of the March 3, 2009 were amended as follows:

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Under Revision of the Subdivision Regulations, 1st sentence should read:

Ms. Hill, Land Use Coordinator, prior to this meeting, suggested a Town Planner review these revisions.

Motion: to accept the March 3, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Planning Commission as amended, by Ms. Gager, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, by 5-0 vote.

Motion: to include subsequent business not already posted on the Agenda, by Ms. Gager, seconded by Mr. Frank, by 5-0 vote.

New Applications

There were no new applications.

Other Business

Procedures and Template for Conservation Easements:

Mr. Frank stated he reviewed Conservation Easement Process drafted by Ms. Payne of the Chairperson of the Conservation Commission and thought it was a little confusing. He asked if this would be something to be distributed to applicants. Ms. Hill stated she thought it was an effort to explain the process and have the Planning and Conservation Commissions on the 'same page'. Ms. Hill stated that Ms. Payne stresses the preliminary discussion in the process. Ms. Hill said this would be valuable and would encourage a potential applicant but it can't be required of an applicant. Ms. Gager stated the preliminary discussion take more time up front but less during the process. Mr. Rimsky asked if the forms for the applicant would be simplified and revised. Ms. Hill stated the application form and the regulations would be revised to include everything that is required of an applicant. Mr. Fowlkes suggested that Town Counsel should review any different language from the approved model easements as opposed to any new language and Ms. Hill noted that the Conservation Commission had already sent the proposed language to Attorney Miles. He asked for clarification of the requirement of 'No town signage such as 'Town Easement Area' will be posted.' Ms. Hill stated other organizations do put up signage for their easements and she thought it meant that 'no, the Conservation Commission is not going to put up signs' for the Town of Washington easement areas. Ms. Roberts asked if Mr. Fowlkes had any

suggestions as how to improve the language. Mr. Fowlkes suggested they could say the Town will not post any signage designating the area. Mr. Frank suggested the commission continue to review this language and give any comments to Ms. Hill.

Referral from the Board of Selectmen/CGS 8-24/Proposed Purchase of 108 New Milford Turnpike:

Ms. Roberts and Mr. Frank attended the site visit and meeting on Saturday, April 4. Ms. Roberts read the letter she drafted to the Board of Selectmen, on behalf of the Planning Commission, as a response to this referral and requested feedback from the commission. Mr. Rimsky stated that he is bothered that there are not any provisions for affordable housing. Ms. Roberts stated the issue of affordable housing should not be ignored. Mr. Rimsky stated land owners give land to the town for open space preservation in return for tax breaks and land owners could also receive the same tax breaks if they donated land to the town for affordable housing and this fact is not promoted as often as it should be. Ms. Roberts suggested the Planning Commission have a discussion with the Housing Commission to discuss where they are and their thoughts on this subject. The Planning Commission is in favor of Ms. Roberts' suggestion. Ms. Roberts volunteered to contact Mr. Hileman of the Housing Commission to arrange a mutually convenient time for an informal discussion. Mr. Frank stated the statute looks for a report, which approves or disapproves and there are different consequences, which follow of the vote that's required. He stated he did not think the letter stated whether or not the Planning Commission approves or disapproves the proposed purchase of the property. He stated that he thought the Planning Commission was leaning towards approval yet, would like some other things taken into consideration. Mr. Frank stated he did not think the Planning Commission could control the funds the Town is using to make this purchase. Ms. Hill stated Town Counsel is researching what the Town could do with the property if a portion of it was needed for municipal use in the future. Mr. Charles encouraged the Planning Commission to read this letter at the Town Meeting tomorrow evening and stated he thought the Town should have a certain amount of flexibility for the use of this land. There was continued discussion among the members of the commission about the drafted letter by Ms. Roberts and what it should contain. The commissions agreed this letter should be narrowly focused and meet the requirements of a CGS 8-24 Report and a separate letter, if necessary, should be composed stating concerns and issues regarding remediation and expenses to Selectman Lyon.

Revision of the Subdivision Regulations:

Ms. Roberts stated the State Archaeologist, Mr. Nick Bellantoni will be attending the May 6, 2009 Conservation Commission Meeting, 5 p.m. in the Land Use Meeting Room and members of the Planning Commission are urged to attend. Mr. Frank asked if there was anything to report on the review of the Subdivision Regulations. Ms. Gager and Ms. Hill stated they would meet and go through the definitions and whatever items they are unable to address will be forwarded to a professional planner.

Communications

Letter from Ms. Holly Reger requesting a 90 day extension for filing subdivision mylar:

Ms. Roberts read the letter from Ms. Reger.

Motion: to grant Ms. Reger/65 Gunn Hill Road, a 90 day extension for filing a subdivision mylar, by Ms. Gager, seconded by Mr. Frank, by 5-0 vote.

Letter from the Conservation Commission re: Warren Cell Tower application:

A short discussion regarding the proposed cell tower occurred. Ms. Roberts stated she had a discussion with Ms. Dupuis of the Conservation Commission. Ms. Roberts stated she would let Ms. Dupuis know the Planning Commission would like to help out but would need more information so they would not be taking any action at this time.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Adjournment:

Motion: to adjourn by Ms. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, by 5-0 vote.

Filed subject to approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelley White
Land Use Clerk