

May 5, 2009

Regular Meeting
7:30 pm, Land Use Meeting Room

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

Members Absent:

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

Alternates Absent:

Staff Present: Janet Hill, Shelley White

Also Present: Kris Collum, Wayne Hileman

Call to Order

Ms. Roberts called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

Seated: Roberts, Frank, Gager, Jahnke, Alternate Fowlkes

Consideration of the Minutes

Motion: to accept the April 7, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Planning Commission as submitted, by Mr. Fowlkes, seconded by Mr. Frank, by 5-0 vote.

Motion:

To include subsequent business not already posted on the Agenda, by Ms. Gager, seconded by Ms. Jahnke, by 5-0 vote.

New Applications

There were no new applications.

Other Business

Seated: Robert, Frank, Gager, Jahnke, Rimsky

Discussion: 16 Titus Road with Mr. Hileman, Housing Commission Chairman:

Mr. Hileman, Chairman of the Housing Commission explained he has come to the Planning Commission to give an update on the 16 Titus Road property. Mr. Hileman stated the Housing Commission has spent several months looking at this property. They were considering the property for an Incentive Housing Zone. Mr. Hileman explained the Incentive Housing Zone is a program initiated by the State Office of Policy and Management that would essentially allow a municipality to create an overlay zone to encourage a 'smart growth type of principle'. It would encourage more residential or commercial development in specific areas of a town. He stated an advantage would be that the Town would receive State money. He stated that the Depot could be a candidate because it was a village center. Mr. Hileman stated the H.C. thought this would be difficult for the Town of Washington. Mr. Hileman stated that the State has cut the funding for this program and the H.C. has decided to not pursue it. Mr. Hileman stated that throughout the process the Housing Commission has been able to examine this parcel. He stated the H.C. discussed two uses. The first use would be to extend the look and feel of the Depot and use the property in a mixed-use scenario, which would entail storefronts with apartments above. The second use considered was a type of senior housing. Mr. Hileman stated, in both cases, the H.C. 'feels strongly' the riverbank should be left unaltered and public access should be maintained. He stated our Land Use Regulations do not allow anything to be built there because it is in a flood plain. Mr. Hileman referred to the Town of Washington's Plan of Conservation and Development. This plan encourages development

closer to the village centers. He stated it could be done but it would be difficult. Mr. Hileman stated the Town had paid for perc tests on the parcel and any septic system on this parcel would have to be engineered, Judea Water Company would service the water needs of the site and the developer would have to incur the costs of hooking the system up. Mr. Collum stated the Town Regulations were meant to protect areas such as this. He stated the town had led its residents to believe that when the Town Garage was relocated this location would be restored and untouched. He also stated that he wasn't sure that Judea Water Company would have to service this parcel. Mr. Carey stated he was sympathetic to the housing issues but did not see the need for more commercial space, as there is empty commercial space in the Depot at present time. Mr. Hileman stated the reason for considering the mixed-use scenario was because of the state requirements if the Town were to receive money from the State of Connecticut Incentive Housing Zone program. Mr. Frank asked what the Housing Commission's plan for the parcel would encompass. Mr. Hileman stated there are 4 acres on the parcel and the Housing Commission thought only about 1 acre would be able to be developed. He stated he understands the need for the regulations and they are protecting the town in most cases however, these are the same regulations that are 'protecting our village centers from ANY development'. Ms. Roberts stated the property has been examined many times over the years and that it is important to look at options for this property, as it is important for the future development and success of our town. There was a discussion about the majority of Washington Depot being in the flood plain and businesses operating and needing flood insurance.

Procedures and Template for Conservation Easements:

The Conservation Commission is still waiting for Atty. Miles.

Revision of Subdivision Regulations:

Ms. Gager and Ms. Hill have finished their review of the draft of the regulations and are ready to send it to a consultant for a professional review. Ms. Roberts stated the money would be in the budget to hire a consultant in July.

Reminder: State Archaeologist, Nick Bellantoni, to attend Conservation Commission Meeting 5/6/09: Ms. Roberts reminded the commission that Mr. Bellantoni would be attending the Conservation Commission Meeting to discuss Archaeological & Cultural Resource Protection in Town Regulations. Mr. Carey, Mr. Rimsky, Mr. Frank and Ms. Roberts stated they planned to attend.

Road Discontinuance:

Mr. Carey asked what actions could be taken in order to discontinue roads. Ms. Hill stated the Conservation Commission had a Road Discontinuance Subcommittee and suggested Mr. Carey inquire about it at the CC Meeting tomorrow. Ms. Roberts stated she would talk the Selectman's Office regarding the matter.

Traffic/Speeding in Washington Depot:

Ms. Braverman asked if the town received funds to install the flashing speed sign in the Depot. There was a discussion regarding speed bumps and other methods to slow traffic in the center of town. Ms. Roberts volunteered to talk to the Selectman's Office about the increasing problem of speeding in town and the lack of action taken to improve the problem.

Communications

Ms. Hill distributed "How To Be An Effective Commissioner" to the members.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Adjournment:

Motion: to adjourn by Ms. Roberts.

Mrs. Roberts adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Filed subject to approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelley White
Land Use Clerk