

July 2, 2002

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mrs. Averill, Mr. Bender, Mr. Buck, Mr. Byerly, Mr. Charles

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mr. Rimsky, Mrs. Roberts

ALTERNATE ABSENT: Mr. Sabin

STAFF PRESENT: Mrs. Hill

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Cook, Mrs. Philips

Regular Business

Mr. Bender called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. and seated Members Averill, Bender, Buck, Byerly, and Alternate Roberts for Mr. Charles.

Consideration of the Minutes

MOTION: To accept the 5/7/02 Special Joint Meeting minutes as presented. By Mrs. Averill, seconded by Mr. Byerly, and passed 4-0-1. Mr. Buck abstained because he did not attend the meeting.

Mr. Charles arrived and was seated.

MOTION: To accept the 5/7/02 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. By Mrs. Averill, seconded by Mr. Byerly, and passed 5-0.

MOTION: To accept the 6/4/02 Regular Meeting minutes as written. By Mrs. Averill, seconded by Mr. Byerly, and passed 4-0-1. Mr. Buck abstained because he had not attended the meeting.

Several points in the 6/4/02 Minutes were discussed. Mrs. Averill asked whether Atty. Byrne had been consulted about whether a small non conforming parcel could be legally conveyed. Mrs. Hill said he had confirmed this could be done, but added he was now working with the Zoning Commission on revisions to the Zoning Regulations, which would prevent this type of conveyance from being used to circumvent the Regulations in the future. Regarding the Plan of Conservation and Development, Mrs. Averill asked that Mr. Chalder be made aware of the First Selectman's request that the Plan address the problem of where to store Town equipment.

The 6/18/02 Special Meeting Minutes were accepted as corrected. Mrs. Payne's name was added to the list of those in attendance.

MOTION: To accept the 6/18/02 Special Meeting minutes as corrected. By Mrs. Averill, seconded by Mr. Charles, and passed 5-0.

The 6/18/02 Minutes were briefly discussed. Mr. Charles explained his idea to finance the purchase of parcels by selling the tax credits and/or development rights to interested parties.

Mr. Rimsky arrived at 7:58 p.m.

MOTION: To accept subsequent business not already posted on the agenda. By Mrs. Averill, seconded by Mr. Byerly, and passed 5-0.

Discussion of "Addition to Minutes - 7/2/02"

Copies of this document were circulated and Mr. Bender asked the Commissioners to read it before proceeding with the discussion. (Copy attached) It noted his disappointment that the Commission had received criticisms from boards and ad hoc groups concerning their alleged inability to participate in the process to update the Plan. In fact, he thought they had had many opportunities to participate and had listed them in the document. Mrs. Roberts agreed that the criticisms were not only unwarranted, but also were destructive to the process. She stressed the need for cooperation between all Town groups. It was the consensus of the Members that this paper should be included with the minutes and circulated to all Town boards and committees. Mr. Bender said the next Special Meeting to discuss the Plan would be advertised on the Town website as well as posted in the Town Clerk's Office as usual.

Plan of Conservation and Development

Mr. Bender noted the Commission had had a rewarding discussion on Chapter 4 at the last Special Meeting, would continue with the topic of historic resources, and hopefully complete this chapter at the July 16 meeting. Mr. Rimsky noted much of this chapter had been generated from the *Natural Resources Inventory Report and Recommendations*. Mr. Bender was concerned that although Mr. Chalder had agreed to pay special attention to this report and those of the other ad hoc committees when drafting the Plan, he maintained he needed freedom to rearrange and even modify some of the reports as some of their recommendations may not be workable or may conflict with Planning Commission recommendations. Mr. Bender thought Planning should be very careful about this as the various groups had done a lot of work on their reports and the Commission expected to follow their recommendations. Mr. Rimsky thought it would be extremely helpful if Mr. Chalder pointed out all potential conflicts so that the Commission could deal with them. He thought there could be problems with the other committees if major elements from their reports were omitted from the Plan. Mr. Bender said he would bring this matter to Mr. Chalder's attention and ask that it be discussed more thoroughly at the next meeting.

Public Comment

Park and Rec Commission/Old Town Garage Site/Titus Road/ Preliminary Discussion

Mr. Cook represented the Park and Rec Commission. He stated that Commission was interested in using the old Town Garage property for ball fields, both soccer and baseball, and presented a rough sketch of the area showing a possible layout. He said he had paced off the property and there would be plenty of room for the fields, parking, and a greenway trail. He said he understood the Town was still using this property for storage, but said Park and Rec wanted it on the record that it was interested in this site. A very lengthy discussion followed. It was the consensus of the Planning Commissioners that they had no problem with the temporary installation of ball fields on this property, but until a study has been completed to determine what the most appropriate use for it would be, they were very reluctant to make a permanent commitment to Park and Rec. It was noted this property is the prime contiguous piece to the existing Depot business district and would be the logical place for affordable housing, expansion of the business district, or other activities, which would ensure the future vitality of the village center. Mr. Cook thought there were more than enough properties available for commercial use, and that the Town's recreational needs had been put off and under funded for too long. Mr. Charles suggested the Primary School property could be laid out to make more efficient use of that site. Mrs. Roberts suggested use of a parcel along Rt. 202 near the state garage that was supposed to be used for ball fields. Mr. Cook said that property was not level and had several other problems that would take years to resolve. Mr. Cook noted

the old Town Garage property is a beautiful piece more suited for a park than for commercial use. Mr. Cook also noted Park and Rec would have a difficult time raising the money to install the fields if donors knew that use of the property was only temporary. It was also suggested that Park and Rec might be successful if it tried to get someone to donate some land for playing fields. Mr. Cook thought this was the Town's responsibility and thanked the Commission for listening to his proposal.

Philips/Wykeham Road and Scenic Roads

Mrs. Philips asked what Town entity she should address concerning the problem of maintaining the rural character of the town roads, speed limits, traffic volume, etc. Mr. Bender advised her that these topics would be addressed in the update of the Plan of Conservation and Development. She was invited to attend the Special Meetings on the third Tuesday of each month. She was also urged to put her views in writing and to get them to Mrs. Hill so they can be forwarded to Mr. Chalder. Mr. Rimsky also advised her there is now a scenic road ordinance committee that she could contact. Mrs. Phillips complained about the current work on Wykeham Road, saying that because it had been widened its rural character had been ruined and the quality of the lives of the nearby residents adversely impacted. She also complained that since it was more level and the local police were reluctant to give tickets, it would become a race course. She recommended that other neighborhoods in Town not allow these kinds of improvements to their roads. Mr. Rimsky wondered if the road really had been widened contrary to promises from the Selectmen's Office, if Planning could insist on a walking or bike path. Mr. Bender advised her to contact the Selectmen's Office.

Correspondence

Mr. Bender noted the following had been received:

1. Letter from the Conservation Commission adding 2 pages to the Open Space Plan.
2. 5/13/02 letter from Ms. Hyll asking the Commission to consider restoring some or part of the old Woodville Business District.
3. Letter from Mr. Boling asking for consideration of village district legislation or establishment of a historic district for New Preston.

This letters will all be forwarded to Mr. Chalder.

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

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

Janet M. Hill
Land Use Coordinator