

June 5, 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, Mr. Osborne

Staff Present: Ms. White, Ms. Hill

Also Present: Mr. Looney, Mr. Harrall, Mr. Bedini, Mr. Picton, Mr. Charles

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

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

Consideration of the Minutes

Regular Meeting of May 1, 2012:

The Commission considered the minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission on May 1, 2012.

Corrections:

Pg. 1 under Plan of Conservation and Development, first sentence should read: Ms. Roberts stated that the Special Meetings held on April 24 and 30, 2012 allowed....

Motion:

to accept the May 1, 2012 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Planning Commission as corrected, by Mr. Carey and seconded by Mr. Frank, passed by 4-0 vote.

Special Meetings of April 10, 2012, April 30, 2012 and May 7, 2012: The Commission considered the minutes from the Special Meetings of April 10, 30 & May 7, 2012.

Motion:

to accept the Special Meeting Minutes of April 30, 2012 of the Planning Commission as submitted, by Mr. Frank and seconded by Mr. Carey, passed by 4-0 vote.

Motion:

to accept the Special Meeting Minutes of April 30, 2012 of the Planning Commission as submitted, by Mr. Frank and seconded by Mr. Carey, passed by 4-0 vote.

Motion:

to accept the Special Meeting Minutes of May 7, 2012 of the Planning Commission as submitted, by Mr. Frank and seconded by Mr. Carey, passed by 4-0 vote.

New Applications

There were no new applications to consider.

Mr. Osborne arrives and is seated.

Other Business

Plan of Conservation and Development

Mr. Looney and Mr. Harrall from Milone & MacBroom, Inc. were present to discuss the proposed contract with that firm and the agenda for the revision of the Town of Washington's Plan of Conservation and Development. Mr. Harrall, Principal of Milone & MacBroom, thanked the Commission. Mr. Looney, Senior Planner and Associate of the firm, introduced himself. Mr. Harrall stated that Mr. Looney would be the Project Manager for the revision of the POCD.

Mr. Looney distributed the Agenda, titled Kick-Off Meeting with Planning Commission – June 5, 2012, Town of Washington, CT – POCD, listing topics that they would like to discuss with the Planning Commission. He stated that they calculated the revised budget at \$29,000.00 based on the Town's budget and the additional components that the Planning Commission requested. He distributed the draft document titled "Agreement Between Town of Washington Connecticut and Milone & MacBroom Inc. for Professional Consulting Services for the Plan of Conservation and Development Update."

The Commission, Mr. Looney and Mr. Harrall discussed the draft of the contract starting with Article 3 – Services of the Consultant. Mr. Frank asked if the consultants would be using information from areas other than Census data. Mr. Looney stated that they would be looking at a number of different sources including the Census data. Ms. Roberts stated that there have been other groups in Town that have researched housing possibilities and asked if the Consultants would be using this information. Mr. Looney stated that they would be looking at research that has already been done on this subject area. There was a brief discussion regarding revaluation and if and how the Grand List would be used. Mr. Harrall stated that they consider this information and that they often use it to compare the data with that of peer communities. There was a brief discussion regarding the number of accessory apartments in Town. Ms. Hill stated that the term "Accessory Apartment" as defined in the Zoning Regulations includes guesthouses, rental units and in-law apartments.

Mr. Looney stated that they would be starting from scratch with the Economic Development component of the updated POCD. He stated that they would look at what has happened in the past ten years, and the potential for economic development uses in the future. Mr. Looney stated that they would gather and analyze data concerning the regional economy and how it impacts the Town of Washington. Mr. Harrall stated that he noticed there was not a section on markets or economics in the Depot Study and that when they look at economics and the village centers they will relate land use issues to the market realities. Mr. Looney stated that they would assess and make recommendations for each of the five village centers individually.

Mr. Looney stated that they would be working with appropriate groups such as the Conservation Commission regarding the Natural Resources, Open Space and Recreation section of the updated POCD. Mr. Rimsky stated that there has been significant work done in these areas that would assist the Consultants.

Mr. Harrall asked if the Commission thinks the Town is looking for environmental/natural sustainability or fiscal sustainability. Mr. Rimsky stated that sustainability has evolved to include many areas and continues to evolve and he feels this would be a vital concern of the community. Mr. Harrall stated that they would assess what is needed to sustain the Town and not drastically change it. He stated that he feels that the Town of Washington seems to be concerned with the natural sustainability of the area. Mr. Rimsky stated that he believes that residents will be looking to the sustainability of homes, local farms, fuel use, transportation and related issues and how these influence future housing, schools, etc.

Mr. Looney stated that they would assess the current community facilities and infrastructure and prepare a mapped database inventory. He stated that they would look at the need for new facilities, identify any problems that might exist, and prepare a list of improvements to community facilities that they would recommend. Ms. Roberts asked if the Consultants would be talking to the Board of Education for the update of the section regarding Community Facilities & Infrastructure. There was a brief discussion regarding Region 12 Schools. Mr. Carey stated they must ask how the economic reality is going to impact our ability to sustain a comfortable mil rate. There was a brief discussion regarding the declining student population. Ms. Roberts stated that there is a large population of weekenders and they tend not to be connected to such problems. Mr. Harrall asked if the school board has recently done any enrollment projections. Mr. Bedini stated that they have projected that these numbers will continue to decline. He noted that the Town spends about \$1.76 on schools for every dollar spent on non-school matters under the Town budget and that State aid is dropping every year.

Mr. Looney stated that they would update the conceptual Future Land Use Plan section and will cover everything else that is statutorily required. He stated that they would be reviewing the consistency of the Town's POCD with the State POCD, which is currently being revised. Mr. Looney stated that they would initiate public outreach by scheduling regular meetings with the public, other town commissions and the Planning Commission to identify the needs and issues.

Mr. Looney reviewed the Public Outreach and Project Schedule with the Planning Commission. The Commission and the Consultants discussed how they could get the weekend or part-time residents involved and interested. They briefly discussed having a day devoted to three separate meetings at facilities located in the Washington Depot, New Preston and Marbledale and the best method of how to inform the public. Mr. Frank asked how the meetings with the public would be conducted. Ms. Hill suggested that the public should discuss their views of possible solutions to the issues. Mr. Harrall stated that they would ask the public to provide input on the specific issues. He noted that they would publicize the occasions when the Consultants would be working in the Town Hall and their availability for discussion with the public at such times. There was a brief discussion regarding how to publicize these events.

Mr. Frank stated that he was concerned with the compressed schedule calling for completion of the POCD substantially in advance of the time required by statute. Mr. Harrall stated that they always make the schedule with room for any delays to give plenty of time for completion by actual due date.

The Commission and the Consultants briefly discussed the rest of the items in the contract. Mr. Harrall stated that they would change the Period of Service Section to 12 months. Ms. Hill stated that when the Planning Commission approves the contract, it is presented to the Board of Selectmen and, if approved by the Board, the First Selectman will sign it on behalf of the Town.

She stated that there is a Board meeting this Thursday.

Mr. Carey asked if this would be considered an update or a replacement of the current POCD. Mr. Harrall stated that they consider it an update. The Commission stated that they want this update to be integrated into one document rather than have certain sections incorporated by reference from the 2003 plan.

Motion:

to approve the engagement of Milone & MacBroom, Inc. (the "Consultant") to provide professional consulting services to the Town of Washington (the "Town") in connection with the 2013 update of the Town Plan of Conservation and Development at a cost of \$29,000.00 in accordance with the terms and conditions of a proposed contract between the Consultant and the Town dated as of June 5, 2012 (the "Contract") transmitted to the Board of Selectmen with these Resolution and, The Planning Commission recommends that the Contract be approved by the Board of Selectmen and signed on behalf of the Town by its duly authorized official, by Mr. Frank, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, passed by 5-0 vote.

Ms. Hill stated that the contract would be presented to the Board of Selectmen at their Thursday, June 7, 2012 meeting and asked that the revised document be emailed to her. Mr. Bedini stated that the Board of Education has current demographic data on the population of Washington and the current school projections and other relevant studies and that he would give them to the Consultants.

Communications

There were no communications to discuss.

Privilege of the Floor

Mr. Picton stated that he is interested in what would be used as a comprehensive framework for sustainability in the updated POCD. He stated that there are models and sets of guidelines for sustainability that cover all the aspects of town planning. Mr. Picton stated that the LEED for Neighborhood Development Guidelines and other sustainability guidelines are available and could be assist the Town when coming up with standards for sustainability and referenced in the updated POCD. He stated that the US Green Building Council's website could be used to find the LEED Guidelines. At the request of the Commission, Mr. Picton stated that he would provide a memorandum to submit to the Consultants regarding his suggestions.

Mr. Charles stated that the current thinking is that the concepts of environmental and economic sustainability are merging rather than being viewed as separate issues as noted earlier by Mr. Harrall.

Adjournment

Motion:

to adjourn by Mr. Frank, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, passed by 5-0 vote.

Ms. Roberts adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley White, Land Use Clerk