

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Bryan Memorial Town Hall
Post Office Box 383
Washington Depot, Connecticut 06794
PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

October 6, 2021

7:30 P.M. – Meeting Via Zoom Conference and In Person

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Hileman, Mr. Rimsky, Ms. Matteo, Ms. Gager

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Ms. Averill

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. White, Ms. Gorra, Ms. Rill

PUBLIC PRESENT: T. Eden, J. Ayer, R. Averill, D. Varnish, J. Lodsine, L. Anderson, L. Larson, R. Dellapietra, P. Sinnott, R. Grey, J. Hubelbank, B. Lombardi, B. Hagenbuch, C. Charles, R. Woodroffe, S. Woodroffe, D. Sarjeant, M. Dar, D. Arturi, E. FitzHugh, K. Leon, K. Collum, J. Hill, J. Gorra, Other Members of the Public

PUBLIC HEARING:

Chairman Hileman called the Public Hearing to order at 7:32pm. He seated himself, Mr. Rimsky, Ms. Matteo, and Ms. Averill. Ms. Gager, attending via Zoom, entered the meeting at 7:35pm.

Ms. Ayer of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments along with Ms. Gorra, Town of Washington's Economic and Community Development Coordinator, presented the Draft Version of the Town of Washington's Affordable Housing Plan. The draft was a collaborative effort between Ms. Ayer, The Washington Housing Commission as well as several town residents and various Commission members.

The Draft Version can be found here:

https://www.washingtonct.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf1396/f/uploads/washington_housing_plan_draft_aug_30_2021.pdf

Ms. Ayer stated that currently there are 44 affordable housing units in the Town of Washington.

The goal is to add 30 new affordable units within the next five years.

Ms. Gorra stated that many of the strategies provided in the plan relied on community involvement, whether it be a donation of land, contributing to the Washington Community Housing Trust, or volunteering for the Housing Commission.

Ms. Matteo questioned if there would be any mention of energy efficiency. Ms. Ayer stated that most home built currently are done so with energy efficiency in mind.

Mr. Rimsky questioned if there were other towns that had separate Planning and Zoning Commissions, and how this effected the outcome of their housing goals. Ms. Ayer stated that there are other towns in

the area with separate Planning and Zoning Commissions. She added that the Washington Zoning Commission was consulted during this process. Mr. Rimsky suggested a strategy be put into place that will assist in making the Planning and Zoning a more cohesive unit.

Mr. Collum of Church Hill Road stated that if State and Federal funding were accepted for building homes, they would have control over who resides in those homes.

Mr. Sarjeant of Church Hill Road questioned if the Planning Commission has a strategy for working with the Zoning Commission. He added that finding some common ground on the issue would be significant.

Mr. Hubelbank of Woodbury Road questioned how the goal of 30 new affordable housing units came to be. Ms. Gorra stated that even one multi-housing unit with one or two single-housing units would bring the numbers up some and be a good start.

Mr. Charles of Tompkins Hill Road stated that an individual property owner was to utilize State statute 8-30-G, they could build affordable housing privately, and wondered if this should be something stated in the plan, as well as ways to demonstrate how to do so. Ms. Ayer explained that an individual property owner could do this, but it rarely happens. Mr. Rimsky added that it may be helpful to provide a property owner with this information. Ms. Ayer stated she is not against doing so but going through an 8-30-G process was typically expensive and lengthy timewise and typically a non-profit organization were involved in the project.

Pastor Sinnott of Hinckley Road encouraged the Commission to have a statement of inclusion that would announce that no one will be turned away due to race, gender, background, or financial situation.

Mr. Hubelbank thanked everyone involved in putting this plan together.

MOTION: To close the Public Hearing for the Draft Version of the Town of Washington's Affordable Housing Plan per §8-30j by the Town's Affordable Housing Committee, by Ms. Matteo, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, passed 4-0 vote.

REGULAR MEETING:

Chairman Hileman called the Regular Meeting to order at 8:23pm.

Ms. Gager informed Chairman Hileman that she has been present during the Public Hearing via Zoom.

Chairman Hileman then seated Ms. Gager.

MOTION: To approve the September 1, 2021 Washington Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes as submitted, by Mr. Rimsky, seconded by Ms. Matteo, passed 5-0 vote.

PENDING APPLICATIONS:

Draft Version of the Town of Washington's Affordable Housing Plan per §8-30j by the Town's Affordable Housing Committee:

The Commission discussed the presented plan and questioned whether items could be added to the Plan of Conservation and Development revisions.

The Commission discussed recommending the Housing Plan to the Board of Selectmen and agreed on the following:

MOTION: The Planning Commission finds that the Draft Version of the Town of Washington's Affordable Housing Plan per §8-30j by the Town's Affordable Housing Committee is consistent with the 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development and will recommend this Draft Version to the Washington Board of Selectmen, by Mr. Rimsky, seconded by Ms. Matteo, passed 5-0 vote.

Referral from Zoning Commission Re: Section 2.3.2.E – Definition of Helipad:

MOTION: The Planning Commission finds that the Referral submitted by the Washington Zoning Commission Regarding the proposed definition of Helipads is Consistent with the 2014 Washington Plan of Conservation and Development, by Chairman Hileman, seconded by Ms. Matteo, passed 5-0 vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES:

Sustainability Committee:

Ms. Matteo stated that she will be meeting with the Washington Environmental Council this month.

Economic Development Committee:

Ms. Gorra briefly discussed the Business District Revisions brought forth by the Zoning Commission, the results of the survey regarding the need for childcare in the Town of Washington, as well as the use of the Explore Washington website this Summer.

Results of the Childcare Survey can be found here:

<https://www.washingtonct.org/economic-development-committee/pages/washington-now-initiative>

Preliminary results of the Census were discussed. The accuracy of the results was questioned and the Commission hoped for more answers when the final results are presented.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION – 2023 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT:

Updates on Outreach to Community Stakeholders:

Chairman Hileman stated that he had several discussions with community members during the Steep Rock Picnic and had been given several thoughts and ideas to consider regarding the POCD

COMMUNICATIONS:

No Communications for this meeting

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

Continued Review of Land Use Maps from HVA:

Chairman Hileman encouraged everyone to continue reviewing the maps and let Ms. White know if they see anything that needed correcting.

Alternate Commission Member:

The Commission is continuing to look for an Alternate Member.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To adjourn the October 6, 2021 Washington Planning Commission meeting at 8:58pm, by Ms. Matteo, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, passed 5-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tammy Rill

Tammy Rill

Land Use Clerk

October 7, 2021

To listen to this evenings meeting, you can do so here:

https://townofwashingtongcc-my.sharepoint.com/:u:/g/personal/trill_washingtonct_org/EZXXRHNS0_xCgLZz11z7OhMBJy7IsYFwGp2JgOFDpQPcLA?e=7eUjRs