

January 2, 2008

Present: Susan Payne Chairperson, Kelly Boling, Linda Frank, Joe Gitterman, Philip Markert

Guests: Adelaide Roberts, Public

Susan Payne began the meeting by noting that regular members Linda Frank, Philip Markert and alternate member Elizabeth Corrigan were reappointed to the Conservation Commission for a three year term which runs until January 1, 2011 by the Board of Selectman.

Minutes of December 4, 2007: Ms. Payne made the following corrections to the minutes: on page 2, throughout replace Council with *Counsel*, on page three, fourth paragraph, add they spoke about development patterns and *adopting* regulations *that accomplish* what we want., page 3, under Other Business, line 2, replace step with *steep*.

MOTION: Phil Markert made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 4, 2007 meeting of the Conservation Commission as amended, Linda Frank seconded the motion, which passed by four votes with Kelly Boling abstaining because he was not present.

Election of Officers:

Motion: Joe Gitterman made a motion to elect Susan Payne as Chairperson and Kelly Boling as Vice- Chair, Linda Frank seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Payne updated members on permanently preserved open space in the town of Washington through 2007, stating that Steep Rock Association had acquired 89 acres, Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust acquired 77 acres and the Town of Washington acquired 13.5 acres through set asides and easements. Susan calculated the permanently protected open space at approximately 23.5% presently in the Town of Washington. She went on to say that 136 acres in Roxbury/Washington was acquired by the Roxbury Land Trust, this is property belonging to Arthur Carter. Joe Gitterman asked about looking at a map showing preservation that includes surrounding towns. Susan Payne answered that the Litchfield Hills Greenprint is a good source. In closing Ms. Payne noted that Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust owns 277.5 acres of permanently protected open space in the Town of Washington.

Referrals or new projects:

Bowles, 52 Carmel Hill Road: The Planning Commission has a proposal for a subdivision for this property which will require open space set aside, Janet Hill noted that the maps calculations were incorrect. Members went ahead and commented on what was proposed, the set asides appear to be located on the north end of the property. Members were in agreement that the Planning Commission should ask for a fee in lieu of the proposed open space set aside. Adelaide Roberts, Chairperson of the Planning Commission addressed members saying the general rule for the Planning Commission open space set aside is that it should be contiguous with other open space parcels or preserve the roadscape. A discussion ensued between members and Ms. Roberts which included wetland/upland preservation, monitoring and asking for a fee in lieu of open space set aside. The Planning and Conservation commissions have started working together on procedures for acquiring conservation easements. Members remained in agreement that the Planning Commission should ask for a fee in lieu of open space set aside or move the open space to protect the roadscape. Kelly Boling suggested allowing septic and driveway to be located within the eased area.

Klein/Cannizzaro, 285 West Shore Road & Tinker Hill Road: This proposal is between sisters and is

exempt from open space set aside. Members did note that there is a proposal for a conservation easement area to include Ash Swamp, the Planning Commission is holding a public hearing on this application tonight.

The Planning Commission has requested that commissions look at implementation of the 2003 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Ms. Payne noted that Elaine Luckey had researched the 1993 POCD and found that quite a lot had been implemented. Ms. Roberts added that this being at midpoint it would serve as a check up to get a sense of what had been done and get suggestions from Land Use boards.

Members looked at what has been done to preserve rural character, enhance village centers, guide housing development and address other community issues within their commission.

Preserve Rural Character

Natural Resource Elements: members felt that through set asides wetland/watercourse and natural systems protection has been accomplished. Phil Markert will look into continued water testing through the Washington Environmental Council (WEC).

Open Space: an Open Space Committee has been established, a plan adopted and fund set up.

Scenic Resources: members worked with Zoning on ridgeline protection. A Scenic Road Ordinance was established and members are working toward Scenic Road status for a section of Route 202.

Agricultural Land and Farming: In supporting local agriculture Kelly Boling suggested the creation of a farmers market in the village center, other member's suggestions for the farm market were along Route 202, expand existing farm stands or at the Washington Primary School grounds. Susan Payne will address this with the selectmen.

Historical Resources: Susan Payne and Betsy Corrigan are working toward encouraging responsible archeological investigations.

Enhance Village Centers

Conservation Design Subdivisions: Members talked about cluster/conservation development. Phil Markert commented about the overlapping powers of the committees and how the Conservation Commission has only advisory powers. Communication between the commissions is key.

In closing Ms. Payne stated that the Conservation Commission will keep on top of resource protection and look for opportunities to use the Open Space Acquisition Funds. Mr. Markert commented that thus far this has been a reactive process instead of proactive, he felt priorities should be established, perhaps solicit opportunities. Members will revisit tax abatement for permanently protected open space. Kelly Boling offered to put together the application for scenic road designation for a section of Route 202. Phil Markert will check into water quality monitoring and Susan Payne and Betsy Corrigan will work on archeological resource protection.

Upcoming Events

January 7th @ 8:30pm joint meeting between Washington Zoning Commission & Planning Commission

January 12th @ 1:00pm educational forum "Responsible Tower Siting, It's More Than Aesthetics" , Cornwall Town Hall

January 29th workshop on roles and responsibilities of land use commissioners in Goshen

Members decided to maintain their goals from 2007:

Route 2020 Enhancement

Key properties/areas of Town to conserve/permanently protect

Strategies for land Preservation

TDR's (Transfer of Development Rights)

Municipal Tax Abatement for Conservation Easements

Conservation or Cluster Development

Adjourned at 6:50pm.

Next scheduled meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission is February 6, 2008 at 5:00pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary