

May 10, 2007

Open Space Committee

Present: Chairperson Susan Payne, Patte Doran, Dan Sherr, Charles LaMuniere, Chick Treadway, Phil Dutton, Diane Dupuis

Motion: to accept the minutes of the April 12, 2007 meeting of the Open Space Committee as submitted was made by Patte Doran, seconded by Charles LaMuniere, passed unanimously.

OS Committee Membership: Chairperson Ms. Payne asked members present for suggestions for active members for the Open Space Committee.

Susan Payne updated members on the two Cell Tower proposals for Route 202. Public Hearings have been set with the Siting Council for June 21st at 3:00pm and 7:00pm.; there will also be a balloon float on this day. Ms. Payne went on to say that the cell tower subcommittee has been reactivated. Diane Dupuis expressed concern that cell tower representatives have stated that to have continuous coverage in the Town of Washington there is a need for cell towers every one to two miles. Ms. Dupuis said the subcommittee is thinking about doing a survey of cell phone users showing their usage and availability of service. Susan Payne noted that coverage is an industry issue, companies don't like roaming, and each company wants their own towers. Chick Treadway asked about the removal of towers when they are no longer used. Diane Dupuis answered that Washington's Zoning Regulations require removal of cell towers.

Report on Tax Abatement: Dan Sherr reports that they have reconstructed the original team of Chick Treadway, Charles LaMuniere, Jack Field and himself. Mr. Sherr went on to say that with the new legislation (Senate Bill No.546/Public Act No. 06-128) they do not have to go through PA-490; it's a much simpler process. They will work on doing a mock up ordinance, with full discussion at the Conservation and Planning Commissions, Board of Finance and Board of Selectman. Dan's goal is for the spring of 2008 and he hopes to have the mock up ordinance at the next Conservation Commission meeting. Patte Doran asked if with the new legislation a municipality can give the easement to a private land trust organization. Dan Sherr answered that it appears that the easement has to stay with the municipality. Mr. Sherr went on to say that the Town could pay a private organization to monitor the easements; he also stated that the new legislation enables the municipality to determine the length of time of the easement. Phil Dutton asked if the size of a parcel was restricted, Dan answered that it doesn't appear to restrict easement size. Susan Payne reminded members that the key was permanent preservation.

Parcel Evaluation: Members looked over maps entitled Peaks and Prominences, Scenic Areas and Vistas, as well as a map showing ridgelines. Charles LaMuniere noted that land with a grade of 25% or higher can not be built on, Charles went on to say that there is an erosion of wetlands and watercourse protection and he feels they need protecting through easements.

There was a limited discussion about the mapping and Arc View capabilities for Land Use. Dan Sherr and Phil Dutton will look into what is here and what is available.

It was decided that members should concentrate and study the Route 2020 corridor. A parcel on Route 202 (formally owned by Owen Moore) is on the market again. It is a 31+ acre parcel with potential for preservation and housing. Susan Payne encouraged members to take a drive on Route 202 and identify parcels. Susan went on to say that Kelly Boling, a member of the Conservation Commission is drafting a

document entitled Route 202 Corridor Enhancement. Phil Dutton asked about money available through land conveyance, Chick Treadway stated that this legislation is dead at the state level.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25pm.

Next scheduled meeting of the Open Space Committee is June 14, 2007 at 5:00pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary