

June 14, 2007

Open Space Committee

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

Susan Payne, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Ms. Payne noted that Eileen Hearn resigned from the Open Space Committee. Susan went on to poll members about changing the meeting time to 4:00pm; she will contact other members and make a decision.

Motion: Chick Treadway made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 10, 2007 Open Space Committee as submitted, seconded by Diane Dupuis, passed unanimously.

Cell Tower Update

Diane Dupuis reported that the Cell Tower Subcommittee sent out a "Cell Tower Survey" to postal patrons in town. Ms. Dupuis stated that 263 surveys have been returned to date. A few statistics so far show that 60% are not in favor of blanket coverage, while 40% are in favor of blanket coverage. Also 80% are concerned by aesthetics, while 30% are concerned with health issues. Diane went on to say that people submitted a lot of thoughtful comments and the majority feel the zoning regulations dealing with cell towers should remain on the books. Because of misinformation in the press surveys will be collected until June 20th, Mary Anne Greene, secretary for the First Selectman will put out the sandwich board reflecting this date. Dan Sherr asked about the tallying of feedback from the surveys. Diane said that she will have an overview for the hearings on June 21st. She went on to say that the meeting at 3:00pm is the formal meeting; they will do a balloon test on the 21st as well. Ms. Dupuis said that neighborhood residents are asking people to come to the sites with their cell phones at 2:00pm to show how much service is already available. Diane closed by saying that most people want coverage in town, but she feels they don't understand how many towers would be needed to get coverage in town.

Site Visit (June 9th) former Moore 31+ acre property on Route 202

Several people did a site visit last Saturday, June 9th. For prior information people referred back to minutes of the Conservation/Open Space Comm. in September & October of 2005. Kelly Boling contacted the sellers who are no longer interested in selling at a lower price, selling price is \$950,000.00. Betsy Corrigan is working on a summary of conservation values on the parcel; it was suggested to check into the geology of the parcel. Susan Payne stated that First Selectman Dick Sears was at the Conservation Commission meeting last week suggesting they carry the banner for this proposal. Ms. Payne felt the Conservation Commission wasn't interested because it doesn't meet open space criteria and should be driven by the housing aspect. She went on to say that the parcel contains a large wetlands area with debris, power lines and access would be expensive. Dan Sherr asked about using this as a remediation project and members went on to talk about the remediation process after the purchase of the Macricostas Land Preserve. Patte Doran suggested that this Route 202 parcel might be a good habitat for endangered species.

Ridgeline Protection - Review Peaks & Prominences Map

Members reviewed a map that depicted elevations of 800'+ with an overlay of permanently protected open space. Protected areas included Mt. Bushnell, Macricostas Land Preserve, Mt. Tom and Mt. Rat along Romford Road. The Averill and Seymour farms were located; the State of Connecticut has bought the development rights to these farms. Nettleton Hollow Road showed a lot of protection along with

River Road. At this time 22.6% of the town is permanently protected, this does not factor in steep grades or wetlands. Susan Payne reminded members of the ridgeline protection through zoning regulation changes that Ric Saunders worked on, should this be revisited? Diane Dupuis suggested gathering information from beyond Washington's borders. Diane is aware of protected areas bordering Washington in Warren on the Tanner Farm as well as over the boarder in Morris. Susan Payne will contact Dan McGuinness at the Northwestern Council of Governments for information.

Members went on to discuss the Marbledale/Wheaton Road area, Zoning Regulations and the use of Special Permits. Kelly Boling of the Conservation Commission is working on possible Scenic Road Designation for parts of Route 202, which has historical houses and archeological sites. Rick Distel will work on a questionnaire to get a feel for creating a Historical District in Marbledale. Phil Dutton felt that it would appeal to businesses in the area to be in a Historical District.

Review Kelly Boling's Route 202 Enhancement Plan: Members have copies of this document and were reminded to review it.

Susan Payne spoke about a 10 acre parcel on Route 202/Wilbur Road owned by Mr. Pappas as a possible conservation easement to the town. Ms. Payne went on to tell members that when Planning Commission open space set asides are needed the Inland Wetlands Chairman Mark Picton would like to see more wetlands protection. Susan also felt the process for the Town of Washington taking an easement needs to be more defined.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15p.

Next scheduled meeting is July 12, 2007 at 4:00pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary