Planning Commission

MINUTES

Regular Meeting

July 1, 2015

7:30 p.m. Main Level Meeting Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Gager, Mrs. Jahnke, Mr. Rimsky

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Frank, Mr. Carey

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mr. Bedini, Mr. Hileman, Ms. Ryland

STAFF PRESENT: Mrs. Hill

Ms. Gager called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and seated Members Gager and Rimsky and Alternates Hileman, Ryland, and Bedini.

Consideration of the Minutes

MOTION: To accept the 6/3/15 Regular Meeting minutes

as written. By Mr. Hileman, seconded by Mr.

Rimsky, and passed 5-0.

Other Business

Plaza Improvements Update: Mr. Rimsky said he had nothing new to report; the committee was waiting to hear from the First Selectman.

Economic Development Subcommittee Report: Mr. Bedini reported that meetings had been scheduled to discuss the two applications for Economic Development Coordinator (EDC) and then to interview the applicants. Mr. Jackson, Mr. Lyon, two members of the Washington Business Assoc., Mr. Sherr, Mr. Bedini, and Mrs. Ayre of the NHCOG are the members of the committee that will conduct the interviews. Mr. Bedini said this committee will be dissolved once the job is awarded to one of the applicants. Mr. Hileman asked if there had been any progress in forming the supervisory/oversight committee that will be working with the EDC. Mr. Bedini noted that was the First Selectman’s responsibility. Ms. Gager will send Mr. Lyon a follow-up reminder. Mr. Bedini also reported that the subcommittee was trying to work with the DOT to get a welcome sign and a directory sign for the Depot installed at the intersection of Rts. 202 and 47.

Sustainability Subcommittee Report: Ms. Gager said she would contact Mrs. Jahnke and ask for a report at the August meeting. Later in the meeting after Mrs. Jahnke had arrived, the Commission learned that the full subcommittee had not yet met. Ms. Gager said she would like to attend its first meeting, but noted if two Commission members would attend, the meeting would have to be noticed.

Traffic Calming in the Depot: Mr. Frank had written a memo suggesting that the Commission resume its consideration of traffic calming measures in the Depot because this has been an ongoing concern and the operation of the farmer’s market at 1 Green Hill Road has again raised the issue. After a brief discussion regarding previous efforts to address this problem, Ms. Gager suggested that an ad hoc committee be established to review the original drawings from the Depot Study and to decide what further steps should be taken. A lengthy discussion ensued. Mrs. Jahnke arrived at 7:39 p.m. Points raised included the following:

* The ad hoc committee should meet with stakeholders and reach a consensus about possible solutions before consulting with the state DOT.
* While traffic calming for the entire Depot is beyond the scope of the proposed Plaza improvements, the entrance/exit from the Plaza and the issue of “walkability” are included and so the consulting firm, TPA, could be consulted at least about these aspects of the problem.
* The Town will have to find out who to contact at the DOT and what the DOT guidelines are.
* If negotiating with the DOT is unsuccessful, the Commission could reach out to local legislators for help.
* The Commission or ad hoc committee could investigate how other towns have successfully controlled traffic while preserving their “village centric feeling.”
* The convenience of on street parking was a matter that was thought should be considered, but also noted was the difficulty that trailer trucks already have when attempting to negotiate entry into The Supply and the Plaza. It was thought the DOT would favor commerce over pedestrian safety when considering traffic calming ideas.
* The installation of speed bumps and paving stones and/or the installation of a flashing light were suggested as relatively simple measures to slow traffic as it enters the Depot.
* The general opposition of the townspeople to the installation of a traffic light in the Depot was noted.
* The POCD lists traffic calming to be primarily the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Ryland and Mr. Rimsky volunteered to participate in an ad hoc committee. Considering that traffic calming is the responsibility of the Selectmen, they will first meet with Mr. Lyon before moving forward, and will report back at the August meeting.

Communications

Mrs. Hill circulated copies of the recent appeal, Montrose Realty Partners, LLC., Steven Spiegel and Virginia Spiegel VS Town of Washington, Zoning Commission, and Washington Planning Commission for those who were interested. Several of the commissioners expressed their opinions about why they thought Section 11.6.2 of the Zoning Regulations, the 30 ft. setback requirement from Town boundary lines, should be retained.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. By Mr. Rimsky.

Ms. Gager adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

Janet M. Hill

Land Use Administrator