TOWN OF WASHINGTON

**Bryan Memorial Town Hall**

**Washington Depot, CT**

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

APRIL 01, 2015

7:30 Upper Level Mtg Room

**Members Present:** Ms. Gager,Mr. Carey, Mr.Frank, Mr. Rimsky

**Members Absent:** Ms. Jahnke

**Alternates Present:** Mr. Bedini

**Alternates Absent:** Ms. Tibbatts

**Staff Present:** Ms. Nelson, Mrs. Hill

**Also:** Mr. Sherr, Mr. Hileman

PUBLIC HEARING:

**Smith/279 New Milford Turnpike/2 lot resubdivision.**

Ms. Gager reconvened the public hearing at 7:30 P.M.

**Seated:** Mr. Carey, Mr. Frank, Ms. Gager, Mr. Rimsky, Mr. Bedini

Ms. Gager read a letter from Arthur H. Howland & Associates, dated April 1, 2015 formally requesting a withdrawal of this application.

**Motion:** to close the public hearing for Smith/279 New Milford Turnpike/2 Lot Resubdivision, by Ms. Gager, seconded by Mr. Carey,

passed 5 – 0 vote.

REGULAR MEETING:

Ms. Gager called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

**Seated:** Ms. Gager**,** Mr. Carey, Mr. Frank, Mr. Rimsky, Mr. Bedini

Consideration of the Minutes:

The Commissioners considered the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 04, 2015.

**Motion:** to accept the March 04, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes of

the Planning Commission as written, by Mr. Frank,

seconded by Mr. Bedini, passed by 5 – 0 vote.

Other Business:

*Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)*

The commissioners discussed adoption of the POCD, noting that the current text contained all the revisions which they had requested.

**Motion:** to adopt the Town of Washington 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development as presented to this meeting in electronic form dated April 01, 2015, to become effective on April 15, 2015; and to publish notice of such adoption prior to such effective date in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Washington.

By Mr. Frank, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, passed 5 – 0 vote.

Mr. Frank added that within 30 days after April 1st 2015, the POCD must be posted on the town website and filed with the Town Clerk. Within 60 days after April 1st 2015, a copy must be submitted to the State Office of Policy and Management.

*Sustainability Subcommittee*

The subcommittee will be chaired by Ms. Jahnke. The initial members will be Chris Charles, Peter Armstrong and Dick Heffernon. They will begin discussions in April and report back as to status at the May meeting.

*Economic Development Subcommittee*

Mr. Sherr stated that the subcommittee was proposing that Town retain an Economic Development Coordinator to coordinate community programming that restores economic vitality and to embed professional processes that assure continued growth for Washington.

The subcommittee based this recommendation on local research as well as conversations with business and community leaders. The general scope of the Coordinator’s work would be (1) to provide professional support and expertise to existing businesses and community organizations, and to act as liaison between the public and private sectors, (2) to identify and acquire resources for economic and community development through grants and other funding activities, (3) to market Washington as a destination to increase the revenues of existing businesses and to attract new ventures, and (4) to organize community promotional events that increase community engagement and bring new spending to retailers. The interest of the group is to focus on business retention and expansion and to make sure the local businesses have sustainable support.

Mr. Sherr noted that the plan also has a regional focus. The subcommittee was recommending that the Economic Development Director be provided under contract by Goman & York, the firm which is advising the Northwest Hills Council of Governments on an economic development plan for eight towns in the region under a state grant. This would allow the Town to hire a seasoned person affordably to work solely for Washington, while also benefitting from the work done for the region. The subcommittee is recommending annual budgetary support of $55,000 for each of two years. This has been presented to both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance.

It is also proposed to organize an ad hoc committee to work with the coordinator. This ad hoc committee would be comprised of a member from each of the Planning, Zoning and Inland Wetlands Commissions along with community stakeholders. This group would monitor progress under this arrangement and would advise the town as to whether its goals are being met or the arrangement should be discontinued under an early termination provision to be included. Ms. Gager said she liked the idea of utilizing a coordinator provided by the regional consultant and she noted the benefits. Ms. Gager also asked about the “measurable outcomes” and what would be used as a starting point to measure success. There was a brief discussion of the issues involved.

Ms. Gager polled the commissioners who were not on the subcommittee and determined that this proposal has their unanimous support.

*Bryan Memorial Plaza Improvement Update*

Mr. Rimsky, the commission’s representative on the Plaza Improvement Committee, stated that there were no new developments to report. Mr. Frank again suggested that Mr. Lyon, First Selectman, be invited to the commission’s next meeting to discuss the proposed plan and its current status. Ms. Gager asked Mrs. Hill to contact Selectman Lyon and invite him to the May meeting.

*Referral from Zoning Commission/Petition to Revise the Zoning*

*Regulations (Section 11.6.2)*

Mrs. Hill advised the commission that the Zoning Commission had received a petition to eliminate Section 11.6.2 of the Zoning Regulations and had referred the proposal to the Planning Commission for its view. The petition that was submitted is asking to eliminate Section 11.6.2 (30 ft. setback from a town boundary line). Mrs. Hill passed out background information on the request. A public hearing is scheduled at the May 18, 2015 meeting of the Zoning Commission.

Administrative Business:

There was none to discuss.

Adjournment:

**Motion:** to adjourn at 8:25 pm, by Mr. Frank, seconded by

Ms. Gager.

**SUBMITTED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL:**

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Linda Nelson, Land Use Clerk 04-07-15

**A recording of this meeting is available to the public in the Land Use Office.**