TOWN OF WASHINGTON

**Bryan Memorial Town Hall**

**Washington Depot, CT**

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

November 4, 2015

7:30 p.m. Main Level Meeting Room

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

**Members Absent:**  Mrs. Gager

**Alternates Present:** Mr. Bedini, Mr. Hileman, Ms. Ryland

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

Mr. Frank called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**Seated:** Ms.Jahnke,Mr. Frank, Mr. Carey, Mr. Rimsky, Mr.

Hileman

**Pivilege of the Floor:** No public present.

**Consideration of the Minutes:**

The commissioners considered the minutes of the October 7, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting.

**Motion:**  To accept the October 7, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Planning Commission as submitted, by Ms. Jahnke, seconded by Mr. Hileman, passed by 5-0 vote.

**Other Business:**

Plaza Improvement Update and Economic Development Report:

Mr. Rimsky stated that First Selectman Lyon gave a summation at the October 29th Economic Development meeting as to what has been happening with the Plaza Improvement Committee. Ms. Ryland asked if TPA Design Group has scheduled a public meeting. Mr. Rimsky stated it has not, nor has it submitted a report. Mr. Frank questioned if TPA has had any discussion regarding scheduling of a meeting for the public, as TPA had in its contract to have a public meeting to allow discussion about the goals and objectives of the street scape. Mr. Rimsky said it had been suggested that since it was not on its time line, that it find a place to do so prior to presenting its plan. TPA stated it would be speaking with stakeholders, but to his knowledge, this has not yet happened.

Mr. Frank was concerned about the lack of attention to River Road. Mr. Rimsky stated that at the last meeting with TPA, he and Ms. Ryland voiced their concern about the limited attention to this area. TPA stated it would address issues beyond the strict scope of this project, which would possibly include River Road. Mr. Rimsky agreed it is important to get a projected analysis and proposals from TPA beyond the immediate physical alteration of the plaza. Mr. Carey wanted to know if the stability of Canoe Brook’s bank granite wall was included. Mr. Dimitri and Ms. Ryland stated this was not included in the budget.

Discussion continued with regards to the design process. Mr. Rimsky would like more input from the Town. He would also like to see a detailed plan by TPA Design Group. Ms. Ryland explained some of the committee’s ideas with respect to the plaza. She stated that some members were concerned that there was too much black top and suggestions had been made to turn some of the Town Hall driveway into a more parklike space and more usable space for the Town. Mr. Carey reminded the commission that there is the Board of Trustees who has a lot of say over what happens with Bryan Memorial Town Hall. Ms. Ryland questioned if the Board of Trustees has actual say on the grounds as well as the building. Mr. Carey thought it did.

Mr. Carey noted that Mr. Talbot, president of the Washington Art Association, had spoken of the Association’s possible future expansion. He said if this were to happen, the Association’s septic system would have to be expanded, which could be a problem since this system is located on Town property. As Mr. Talbot also serves on the Plaza Improvement Committee, Mr. Carey felt that septic concerns would be addressed as the project moves forward.

Mr. Frank spoke briefly about the Economic Development Advisory Committee. He went over Mr. Lyon’s discussion at the Planning Commission’s June meeting, pointing out that Mr. Lyon felt that due to the fact that it would be made up of cross section of Town boards, commissions, Washington Business Association representatives, etc. that it should be an independent committee that reports to the Board of Selectman. He felt monthly reviews and monitoring of what is being accomplished are two important functions of this committee. Mr. Lyon stated the Economic Development Advisory Committee would be comprised of members from planning, zoning, inlands/wetlands, finances, a couple of members of the Washington Business Association and residents from Washington Depot, New Preston and Marbledale, which would bring the number of members to eight. The new economic development coordinator would report to this group. Mr. Frank stated that Mr. Lyon had not yet appointed all of the members of the Advisory Committee.

Ms. Ryland stated her support for a committee to oversee the Economic Development consultants TPA and to assure the funds are being spent where they should be. Mr. Rimsky feels that this should be more of an economic strategy with a vison. Mr. Hileman feels Goman and York’s work should go beyond the scope of tourism and demographics of the Town should be included. He feels the consultants are knowledgeable on how to do this. Mr. Dimitri talked about the empty store fronts being a concern and pointing out that schools are the town’s largest industry with parents being the “captive audience” and hold an economic interest in this community. He hopes that on this limited budget that the consultants will work on the strategies to shape the direction of this work. Mr. Frank pointed out that as Goman and York are also working with nearby towns with similar problems, this was a wise decision to work with them.

Mr. Frank asked Mr. Hileman if he would be willing to be the commission’s representative on The Economic Development Advisory committee. Mr. Hileman stated he would.

**Motion**: To appoint Mr. Hileman to represent the Commission on

the Economic Development Advisory Committee, by Mr.

Frank, seconded by Ms. Jahnke, passed by 5-0 vote.

Mr. Bedini clarified that he is working with an informal volunteer committee on economic development and it would be the soon to be appointed Economic Development Advisory Committee that the Sustainability Subcommittee should meet with.

**Sustainability Subcommittee Report**:

Mrs. Jahnke circulated copies of the meetings Sustainability Subcommittee’s October 28, 2015 minutes and stated it wanted to meet with the Economic Development Committee. (Mr. Bedini clarified that this is not a committee and that there are four of them that are concerned citizens only.) Mr. Rimsky noted the value of the Sustainability Subcommittee has to these groups involved in this process. Mrs. Jahnke stated that the committee has knowledgeable people serving on it and that they welcome input from the Planning Commission. There will be a Sustainability meeting prior to the next Planning meeting and Mrs. Jahnke hoped the Planning commissioners would submit their input in time for that meeting.

**Traffic Calming**:

Ms. Ryland stated there would be nothing to report until the Plaza Improvement Committee makes more progress.

**Administrative Business**:

Mr. Frank stated that he and Mrs. Hill would soon resume work

on the revision of the Subdivision Regulations. Mr. Hileman

requested a digital copy of the Regulations. Regarding the

current draft, Mr. Frank noted it has inconsistencies

and should address statutory changes. Mr. Frank informed the

Commission that it has a $5,000.00 budget for a Land

Use attorney to review the final draft. An attorney has not yet been chosen. Mr. Hileman did recommend a land use attorney that he knows in New Haven.

**Adjournment**:

**Motion**: To adjourn the meeting by Mr. Hileman.

Mr. Frank adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

**SUBMITTED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL:**

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Donna Pennell, Land Use Secretary