**Bryan Memorial Town Hall**

**Washington Depot, CT**

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

December 6, 2017

7:30 p.m. Upper Level Meeting Room

**Members Present:** Mr. Hileman, Mr. Rimsky, Mr. Carey, Ms. Jahnke, Ms.Gager

**Alternates Present:** Mr. Bedini

**Alternates Absent:** Ms. Ryland

**Staff Present:** Ms. Hill,Ms. White

**Others Present:** Mr. Smith

**REGULAR MEETING:**

Mr. Hileman called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and seated himself, Mr. Carey and Ms. Jahnke, Ms. Ryland and Mr. Bedini.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:**

No one from the public was present.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES:**

Consideration of the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 1, 2017:

**Motion:** To accept the November 1, 2017, Regular Meeting Minutes as submitted. By Ms. Gager, seconded by Ms. Jahnke, approved 5-0 vote.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**CGS 8-24 Referral/Town of Washington/10 Blackville Road/Construct Fire Department Training Building:**

Mr. Smith, Captain of the Town of Washington Volunteer Fire Department was present to discuss the proposed construction of a Fire Department training building at the Town Garage property. He stated that the proposed building will be approximately 1,600 SF and built with Connex boxes which are stacked on top of each other. He informed the Commissioners that they are proposing to locate the training facility further up the property near where the materials storage area is located. Mr. Smith indicated the proposed location on a property map. He noted that the area is already cleared and sufficiently buffered from the residents along Bee Brook Rd. The proposed building will be a little more than 260ft from the property line and 265-270ft from the nearest residence.

Mr. Smith explained to the Commissioners the difficulty of retaining and recruiting new firefighters because of the extensive training that they must go through. The closest training facility for the Washington Fire Department to use is in New Milford but isn’t really considered an official “burn building.” This proposed building is classified as a burn building and they will be able to burn “Class A” materials which is basically 2 wooden pallets or 1-2 bales of hay. He noted accelerants will not be permitted as they are restricted to NFPA regulations which are extremely stringent.

Mr. Smith stated that in order for the firefighters to stay current they are required to have a minimum of 1 (preferably more) live fire training per year. He noted that the Town of Washington Vol. Fire Department has been using facilities in Danbury which will not be available to them anymore and the closest facility would then be in South Windsor, CT. The volunteers would have to travel an hour and a half both ways to that facility.

Mr. Rimsky asked if the surrounding towns would be able to use it.

Mr. Smith responded that it would be a possibility maybe once or twice a year. He said that this is specifically for training the Town of Washington Fire Department and they would invite other towns to train with them occasionally. There is an annual fee that they have had to pay to use other facilities in the area.

Mr. Smith explained how the building works regarding training with live fire and smoke. He said that the purpose is to simulate as close to a real fire as possible.

Ms. Gager asked if the neighbors would be exposed to any of the smoke from these training fires.

Mr. Smith responded that they would not be exposed to anything more than if there was a wood stove burning. He noted that this type of fire would be under strict control and usually takes no more than 50 gallons of water to put out. He said that the use of a smoke machine in a closed environment is effective in training.

There was a brief discussion regarding the color of the building. Mr. Smith stated that they are considering the green but their options are open and he welcomed input from the Commission.

Chairman Hileman asked if the head of the Town Garage has seen this plan and if they are okay with this.

Mr. Smith stated that he is the Highway Department Director for the Town of Washington. He explained that with the first application they went to the New Preston Fire House because it would have been preferable to be on Fire Department Property and the Fire Department property on Bee Brook Rd is not a feasible site for this training building. When considering this proposed site, they decided to get approval from the Board of Selectmen first.

Mr. Smith confirmed that this proposed building would be owned by the Town of Washington which is used by the Town’s volunteer fire department.

Mr. Hileman confirmed that a burn building is technically a municipal improvement.

Mr. Smith stated that they are raising funds to build the building.

Ms. Gager asked when he thinks they will have funds to build the proposed building.

Mr. Smith stated that it would cost approximately $250,000 and they have almost reached that goal.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Smith and the Volunteer Fire Department for their service and their proactive approach to continuing their training.

Mr. Smith discussed the programs that they will be able to hold to attract candidates for fire fighters.

There was a brief discussion regarding their time table. Mr. Smith stated that they still need to get approvals from Zoning, there will be no need to clear, and the piers would have to be dug. He estimated that the building would be done by the end of March or beginning of April.

**Motion:** In consideration of a parcel located at 10 Blackville Road in Washington Depot, aka the Washington Highway Department, the Washington Planning Commission has examined and discussed the proposed construction of a training facility to be used by the Washington Volunteer Fire Department. The Commission finds that the proposed construction and subsequent use of the facility is consistent with the Town’s 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development. The constitutes the Commission’s comment on this matter pursuant to C.G.S. 8-24, by Mr. Bedini, seconded by Ms. Gager, approved by 5-0 vote.

**Plan of Conservation and Development:**

**Economic Development Advisory Committee Report:**

Mr. Hileman stated that this committee has not met since the Planning Commission’s last meeting. He noted that there is some work being done on trying to get WiFi in the Depot.

**Sustainability Subcommittee Report:**

Ms. Gager stated that Ms. Jahnke gave her all the necessary documents. Ms. Gager said that she reached out to all the people that had been involved before and she is hoping to meet with them sometime this month.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mr. Hileman announced that this was Ms. Jahnke’s last meeting with the Planning Commission as her term expires at the end of the month and she will not be seeking another term. Mr. Hileman thanked Ms. Janke for her service to the Town and on the Commission on behalf of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Hileman stated that he has been asked and decided to join the Board of an organization called Northwest Connect. He explained that they are a regional group comprised of local leaders in the Northwest Hills and their mission is to come up with a plan to provide fiber optic internet service for every home and business in Litchfield County.

**ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

**Approval of 2018 Calendar:**

The Commissioners reviewed the propose calendar.

**Motion:** To approve the proposed 2018 Planning Commission Calendar of scheduled meetings, by Ms. Gager, seconded by Mr. Carey, passed by 5-0 vote.

**Revision of the Subdivision Regulations:**

The Commissioners reviewed Section 1 of the Town of Washington Subdivision Regulations. They made various changes and updates. Mr. Hileman stated that this is the beginning of the revisions and they will work on each section a little at a time. A public hearing will be held and revisions voted on when all sections are finished.

**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m. By Ms. Gager, seconded by Ms. Jahnke, approved 5-0 vote.

**FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL**

Respectfully Submitted,

By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Shelley White, Land Use Clerk

December 12, 2017