

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Bryan Memorial Town Hall
Post Office Box 383
Washington Depot, Connecticut 06794
Planning Commission Regular Meeting
November 6, 2019
MINUTES

Main Level Meeting Room – 7:30pm

Members Present: Mr. Hileman, Mr. Cole, Mr. Rimsky, Mr. Carey

Members Absent: Ms. Gager

Alternates Present: Ms. Matteo

Staff Present: Ms. White, Ms. Rill

Public Present: Mr. Charles, Ms. Rea, Mr. Talbot, First Selectman Lyon, Ms. Lyon, Mr. Ballester, Mr. LeClaire, Mr. Baylock, Other Members of the Public

The Meeting was Called to Order at 7:30pm by Chairman Hileman. He then seated himself, Mr. Carey, Mr. Rimsky, Mr. Cole and Ms. Matteo for an absent Ms. Gager.

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES (18 sec.):

MOTION: To approve the October 1, 2019 Meeting Minutes, by Mr. Rimsky, seconded by Mr. Cole, passed 5-0 vote.

PENDING APPLICATIONS (46 sec.):

There are no Pending Applications for this evenings meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS (50sec.):

Chairman Hileman stated that he wished to invoke his privilege of the Chair, and proceed with Agenda Item B. – Referral for 8-24, Town of Washington – for purchase of property at 70 Scofield Hill Road first this evening.

The Commission was presented a letter dated November 6, 2019, signed by First Selectman Mark E. Lyon, with the proposal to purchase .353 acres of Property from Edith C. Johnson of 70 Scofield Hill Road, for the agreed upon price of \$3000, to allow the town to realign the intersection of Mygatt Road and Scofield Hill Road, to improve the sightlines to the east exiting Mygatt Road.

First Selectman Lyon also presented the Commission with a map titled, "Property/Boundary Survey, Map Prepared for Edith C. Johnson, 70 Scofield Hill Road, Washington, Connecticut", dated August 2013, Revised 12-3-13, Prepared by T. Michael Alex, Licensed Land Surveyor.

Chairman Hileman explained that when the Town wishes to purchase a property, the Board of Selectmen have to seek what is referred to an "8-24 Referral" from the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission then decides if the purchase is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development. Once the referral is made to the Planning Commission, it is then brought to the Finance Board for referral, and if approved, the purchase is then presented at a Town Meeting.

MOTION: In consideration of a proposed property at 70 Scofield Hill Road, Washington, CT by the Town of Washington, the Washington Planning Commission has determined that the proposed purchase is consistent with the town's 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development. Motion made by Chairman Hileman, seconded by Mr. Cole, passed unanimously.

Request of Rea, 53 West Church Hill Road – For Consideration of Scenic Road Designation (7min. 18sec.):

Ms. Rea presented the Commission with an application and binder of information titled, "Rea Scenic Road Designation Application, 2013 – 2019, West Church Hill Road, East of Fenn Hill Road".

Chairman Hileman stated that Scenic Road Designation is a Town Ordinance, which has the effect of law, so he and the Commission had to follow the ordinance to the letter.

Mr. Talbot, representing Ms. Rea, explained to the Commission that safety was the main concern of Ms. Rea and her fellow neighbors on West Church Hill Road. He stated that when the town was considering paving West Church Hill Road in 2013, that Ms. Rea had started the process of a request for Scenic Road Designation with an application, but that the process had somehow fallen through the cracks. Chairman Hileman asked for clarification of this statement, questioning if Mr. Talbot meant the process was somehow ignored by the town. Mr. Talbot explained that he and Ms. Rea were not accusing anyone of dropping the ball on the matter.

Mr. Hileman stated that in following the process of Scenic Road Designation, that the next step would be to schedule a Public Hearing.

MOTION: To schedule a Public Hearing for the Request of Rea, 53 West Church Hill Road, for consideration of Scenic Road Designation, for Wednesday, December 4, 2019, 7:30pm in the Main Meeting Room of Bryan Memorial Town Hall, Washington Depot, CT, by Chairman Hileman, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, passed 5-0 vote.

Mr. Rimsky questioned what work had been done to West Church Hill Road thus far, stating that he had travelled the road a few hours prior to this meeting, and was certain he had seen some milling being done. First Selectman Lyon stated that it had been paved up until the crest of West Church Hill Road due to a maintenance issue, but it will not be paved any further than this. Mr. Talbot stated that he and the residents of West Church Hill Road were under the impression that the paving was not happening until November 11, 2019, and that it was disappointing to find out that the paving was happening this morning. Mr. Talbot then presented the Commission with photographs taken prior to this evenings meeting, measuring the width of both West Church Hill Road, as well as Lower Church Hill Road. He stated that he did not have an issue with a section of the road getting paved as long as it was done appropriately, however, he was appalled at how it was done.

Mr. Ballester of River Road, questioned if the town's overall goal was to pave all of the town's dirt roads, or if it was to preserve the character of the rural area.

Mr. LeClair voiced concern over GPS monitors directing large trucks and vehicles down a very narrow roadway.

Mr. Talbot, voicing his frustration with the paving happening prior to the meeting, questioned whether or not the town would be willing to make a change to what has been done so that the road appears to be more narrow.

Chairman Hileman explained that the Planning Commission does not have the authority to make those decisions. He suggested speaking to the Board of Selectman and/or the Washington Highway Department's director.

Economic Development Committee Update (1hr 00min. 37sec.):

Chairman Hileman stated that the Committee met last month and were meeting again next week. He informed the Planning Commission that the Committee has decided to move forward with pursuing an Economic Development Director, developing a job description for the position, and hopefully making it a line item in next year's budget.

Sustainability Committee Update (1hr. 02min. 51sec.):

There was no update for this evenings meeting.

Plan of Conservation and Development – 5 Year Revisions (1hr. 03min.09sec):

Mr. Cole stated that he believed there were issues that remained "live" that needed to be worked on, and would like to put together a draft of action items to move forward with.

COMMUNICATIONS (1hr 07min 35sec):

There were no Communications for this evenings meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS (1hr. 07min. 38sec):

Chairman Hileman reminded the Commission that the Town is coming up on budget season beginning in January, and would like to start thinking about the 2023 Plan of Conservation and Development, if the Commission felt they needed to hire a consultant, and if so they would need to allocate funds for one. Other things to be considered would be whether or not the Commission felt that the Plan needed and update, a revision, or a complete overhaul.

MOTION: To adjourn the November 6, 2019 Washington Planning Commission Meeting at 8:55pm, by Chairman Hileman, seconded by Mr. Rimsky, passed 5-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tammy Rill
Land Use Clerk
November 8, 2019