

**TOWN OF WESTFORD**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Minutes for December 16, 2015 Meeting**  
Approved on February 17, 2016

**Commission/Board Members Present:** Jeremy Berger, Wendy Doane, Gordon Gebauer, Seth Jensen and Mark Letorney.

**Absent:**

**Also present:** Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator), David Crane and David Gauthier.

The meeting began at 6:30 p.m.

**Citizens to be Heard**

David Gauthier and David Crane were present.

Both individuals had questions about the State's Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) program and the possibility of developing David Gauthier's 20 acre parcel on the west side of Brookside Road.

Melissa explained that the State intends to revise the NDA criteria in 2016 to allow more rural town centers to enroll.

Gordon generally explained the subdivision process, density bonuses, residential housing requirements and the intent of the Village District under the proposed regulations. He also mentioned that natural resources and gravel road impacts would likely be the determining factors in calculating the actual allowable subdivision density.

Melissa stated that the Town has discussed asking property owners to upgrade public culverts if additional stormwater from a development will overwhelm existing culverts.

**2015 & 2016 Implementation Plan**

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed their proposed 2016 Implementation Plan as well as the Selectboard's 2016 Implementation Plan.

**Joint Meeting Invitations**

The Planning Commission discussed that the intent of the joint meetings is to discuss current issues, projects, etc. and review each board's 2016 Implementation Plan with them.

**Planning Commission Work Plan**

The Planning Commission reviewed their 2016 work plan and joint meeting schedule.

Furthermore, they discussed the 2016 Implementation tasks that need to be included in the work plan.

Melissa will add the school property and Jackson Farm and Forest Project to the agenda of every meeting and draft a schedule to complete the Commission's 2016 Implementation tasks. The Commission will review the revised work plan at their next meeting.

## **Jackson Farm & Forest Project Updates**

Gordon gave a brief update on the Jackson Farm and Forest Project.

### **FY 17 MPG**

Melissa informed the Commission that the Town was awarded a Municipal Planning Grant to conduct phase two of the Jackson Farm community wastetwaer project. She said the work would likely begin in late summer after the Town has that assurance funding has been secured to purchase the property. She said if the project falls through the Town would focus their attention and efforts on the White Church property.

### **RED & School Property**

The Commission reiterated that they feel strongly about the 15 ac and 50 ac parcels currently owned by the school being transferred to the Town as soon as possible to ensure ownership is retained by Westford residents.

The Commission agreed to call for an advisory vote at Town Meeting if it doesn't appear as though progress is being made on the transfer.

Jeremy asked that messaging and marketing of the Commission's stance be placed on an upcoming agenda.

The Commission asked Melissa to email the Selectboard to inform them that the Commission is willing to help them with this project.

### **Neighborhood Development Areas– VT DHCD Meeting**

Melissa said she spoke with John Adams who informed her that the State would be revising the NDA criteria early next year.

### **Act 250 Criterion 9L**

Seth gave a brief overview of criterion 9L. He said he has been working with a group to draft a 9L guidance document since the criteria itself is subjective. He informed the board that Westford's proposed R5 language was shared and proved very helpful in the writing of the guidance document due to the fact that it considers existing development as well as existing landscape features and topography instead of development alone.

### **Act 250 & Legislation**

The Commissions briefly discussed local Act 250 review and the sentiment is that it will not gain traction at the State level.

### **Town Common Boundary**

Melissa said that Warren Robenstein has not been returning her phone calls and she is concerned that the project has taken far longer than what was originally discussed. She fears that the project costs will come out of this fiscal year in which case the Commission will be over budget.

### **Minutes of the November 18, 2015 Meetings**

The Planning Commission will review the November minutes at their next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:06 pm.

Submitted by, Melissa Manka, Westford Planning Coordinator