

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minutes for March 16, 2016 Meeting
Approved on April 18, 2016

Commission/Board Members Present: Jeremy Berger (Chair), Gordon Gebauer, Seth Jensen and Mark Letorney.

Absent: Wendy Doane.

Also present: Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator), David Adams, Sue Adams, Dan Albrecht and Danielle Owczarski.

The meeting began at 6:38 p.m.

Annual Reorganization

Mark MOVED to appoint Gordon as Chair.

Jeremy SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 3 – 0.

Jeremy MOVED to appoint Wendy as Vice Chair.

Gordon SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 3 – 0.

Gordon MOVED to appoint Mark as Clerk.

Jeremy SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 3 – 0.

Town Common Boundary

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed the town common boundary survey prepared by Warren Robenstein, licensed surveyor, and agreed that the mylar should not be recorded until the easement deeds serving the dwellings south of Common Road are recorded. The Commission asked the Selectboard to discuss fund options for the preparation and recording of the easement deeds. Dave said he would bring this matter before the Selectboard at their next meeting.

Jackson Farm & Forest Project

Melissa informed the group that they were waiting on the amended appraisal.

FY 17 MPG

Melissa said the Commission will need to decide whether to pursue the White Church or the Jackson project soon. Melissa mentioned the need to release an RFP and hire the contractor by May.

Seth told Melissa to contact the State to verify whether the Town can hire Stone Environmental without releasing an RFP since they will be continuing work they've already started. He suggested Melissa review the procurement procedures to verify this option is possible before contacting the State.

David had concerns that the Town Office wastewater system will fail prior construction of a community system. He said he's heard suggestions that the Town should connect to the Spiller wastewater system now, but does not feel that is the right solution, nor a long-term one. Seth suggested that the Town pursue acquiring a cost estimate for placing an effluent pipe through the ledge running north-south along the upper Common and Brookside Road since that will be a major expense for both projects, but it will determine the economic feasibility of the White Church project. He said knowing the cost of piping through the ledge will better inform the Town of our options if the town system were to fail sooner rather than later. David also said Melissa was going to get a cost estimate for Town Office and Library hook up to the Spiller system in case of an emergency situation.

RED & School Property

Dave gave the Commission an update. He stated that the Schoolboard is willing to transfer parcel #2 (lower recreation field) & #3 (river frontage & trails) to the Town. He said the Schoolboard, Selectboard and Town Attorney will be working on a use agreement which is expected to be quite involved. He said they are looking at each parcel's value to the non-owner in drafting the agreement. Parcel #1 (school) has a lot of value to the Town (shelter, community use, town meeting, public parking, etc.), Parcel #2 has value to the school for recreational use and Parcel #3 has value to the school for recreational use. Dave informed the group that the Schoolboard and Selectboard are aiming for voter approval of land transfers at the November general election. Dave said the Westford- Milton Road property sale was approved by voters in March. He added that the Schoolboard has approved the sale and the Selectboard now needs to do the same at their next meeting. The property will then be listed with a local real estate agent.

Spiller Property

Melissa reiterated that the Selectboard has charged the Planning Commission with planning for the future of the Spiller lot. However, the planning will depend on the outcome of the community wastewater projects.

Annual Joint Meeting with Selectboard

The Planning Commission and Selectboard reviewed the Selectboard, Road Committee and Planning Commission 2016 Implementation Plans.

River Corridor Regulations

Danielle Owczarski, ANR Tactical Basin Planner, and Dan Albrecht, CCRPC Senior Planner, were present.

Danielle gave a hand out to the Commission, which outlined the intent and purpose of the *Lamoille Watershed Tactical Basin Plan*. The intent and purpose of the Plan is to guide officials and citizens in protecting high quality waters, reclassifying of public waters, restoring the quality of areas in need and maintaining areas in good condition. She said the Plan is a compilation of scientific data, studies and knowledge, which lists and prioritizes projects to be implemented by communities and public officials. She stated that she has knowledge of different funding sources in order to implement said projects. She said this is where she is of best use after the adoption of the Plan. She said the Browns River's water quality issues are stormwater, channelization, riparian buffer loss, erosion and the absence of brown trout. Danielle said the Town should focus on riparian buffer, tree planting and talking to farmers.

Seth said we're losing good farm land and the Town should work towards preserving farmland to offset loss due to development.

Dan asked that Melissa send out the tactical basin plan questionnaires to town officials and community.

The Commission then reviewed the River Corridor and River Corridor Protection Area maps. They agreed they're comfortable with the River Corridor Protection Area. However, the River Corridor encompasses much of the Town's proposed growth area, known as the Town Center Area.

Dan suggested the Town ask Staci Pomeroy whether the Town can use River Corridors outside the Town Center Area and River Corridor Protection Areas within the Town Center Area and still receive full funding under the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund.

Seth suggested we contact Staci to ask whether the 400 foot WRO waiver language can be carried over to the River Corridor language.

Dan also suggested that the Commission ask Pam and Melanie at the CCRPC conduct a build out for effected parcels and count impacted homes.

The Commission agreed they would need to conduct public outreach and hold meetings with effected property owners.

Revisions to discuss with Staci Pomeroy, ANR River Scientist:

Impacts to Bisson property

Impacts to Peck/Meehan Property

Impacts to Town Center Area

River Corridor and Fluvial Erosion Hazard discrepancies south of Town Cenetr Area.

Citizens to be heard

There were no citizens to be heard.

Draft DRB Forms & Requirements

The Planning Commission will review the draft DRB forms and checklists at their next meeting.

Planning Commission Work Plan

The Planning Commission reviewed their 2016 work plan.

Minutes of the February 17, 2016 Meeting

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

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:24 pm.

Submitted by,

Melissa Manka, Westford Planning Coordinator