

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minutes for May 20, 2019 Meeting
Approved on June 17, 2019

Commission/Board Members Present: Koi Boynton, Wendy Doane, Gordon Gebauer, Seth Jensen (arrived at 6:45 pm) and Mark Letorney.

Commission/Board Members Absent:

Also Present Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator), David Gauthier, Juliette Horton and Ted Horton.

The meeting began at: 6:34 p.m.

Amendments to Agenda

M. Manka requested that review of the amended Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policy be added to the agenda.

Citizens to be Heard, Announcements & Other Business

No citizens to be heard.

The Planning Commission reviewed and further revised the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policy.

G. Gebauer MOVED to approve the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policy as amended.

W. Doane SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 4 – 0.

Emergency Relief & Assistance Fund & River Corridor Overview & Discussion

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed ERAF, Westford's ERAF status, River Corridor mapping in Westford, the implication of River Corridors on ERAF, Dan Albrecht's email and the ANR's model River Corridor regulations. The Planning Commission agreed to fold the River Corridor regulations into the Flood Hazard Overlay in order to maintain the highest level of ERAF funding. The reasoning behind this method is both are hazard overlays as opposed water quality and ecology overlays like the Water Resource Overlay. The Planning Commission asked M. Manka to discuss the matter with D. Albrecht and depending on that conversation determine whether a June meeting with D. Albrecht is necessary.

Draft Statutory Amendment Letter (S. Jensen)

S. Jensen noted that a letter to the legislature may not be the best course of action and felt meeting with B. Bancroft may be a better route to advocate for change.

Neighborhood Development Area Designation (NDA) - T5 Approval & T4 Strategy

M. Manka reiterated that the town received NDA approval for the T5. However, she was greatly

surprised at the reception she received and the comments made at the Downtown Development Board meeting. She said Board members questioned whether rural villages should be given state incentives that promote development. Concerns were voiced that incentive programs would change the character of villages, development within rural villages was not carbon neutral because they were not employment centers and development should be promoted in urban centers. The Commissions agreed that more advocate at the regional level may be warranted and useful.

The Planning Commission then discussed T4 NDA designation. The Commission decided to proceed by 1) responding to ACCD legal opinion regarding T4 NDA eligibility and 2) giving a copy to B. Bancroft and inviting him to a Planning Commission meeting to discuss the issues at hand (village vitality, affordable housing needs, economic development, public infrastructure funding, etc.)

Community Wastewater – Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) Requirements, PER Cost Estimate & CWSRF RFP

M. Manka stated that she reviewed the PER requirements and it does appear as though we've addressed many of them already. She said she contacted Lynette at the DEC to discuss the matter and Lynette offered to review Westford's studies to make a PER requirement determination. M. Manka said she would follow up with Lynette shortly. The Planning Commission agreed to collect as much information as possible prior to undertaking full-on community involvement to allow for a fully informed community discussion.

W. Doane said she liked the idea of giving buy-in options. S. Jensen said pre-purchase of capacity will help determine the initial size of the system.

S. Jensen said a full PER is not necessary at this point since the town already completed about half of the requirements. He noted that it would be useful if the PER resulted in connection fees and pre-purchase amounts as it would be good to have those number for discussions. S. Jensen asked the capacity of each proposed phased? M. Manka said she would need to look into it. S. Jensen asked that the fees structure of Warren and Waitsfield be secured for Commission review and discussion. He added that the town should investigate metering as it can increase capacity by reducing usage requirements.

Ted and Juliette Horton asked when the system would be built. They said they're in the process of selling their subdivided lots off Brookside Road and the current state permitted systems will cost approximately \$40,000 to install. The Planning Commission said its early days and they are currently in the process of collecting information. There is no estimated date of construction.

Town Center Updates

M. Letorney said G. Pigeon will allow a phase 1 brownfield study an after cleaning up the property. M. Manka noted that G. Pigeon should contact D. Albrecht to discuss the program prior to giving to the town permission to submit a site nomination form to CCRPC.

M. Manka noted that L. Johnson and M. Kirick are planning a BMH brewery event and Town Common 200th anniversary party at the end of August. The Commission agreed the BMH should provide a porta potty at large events due to concerns over the existing leach field's ability to

handle increased usage.

M. Manka informed the Commission that the town did not receive the AARP placemaking grant for the town common crosswalk. She said Planning Commission special project funds will be used with the Highway Department doing the installation. She noted that K. Lalley is in the process of applying for AOT 1111 Permit.

M. Manka informed the group that a realtor contacted the town office the prior week to inquire about properties for sale in the village, which could be used for senior and work force housing.

Vermont Council on Rural Development Update & Topics Points

M. Manka said our first meeting with VCRD is set for May 22nd. The Planning Commission discussed VCRD topics, which included communication, community involvement, multigenerational offerings and opportunities, village wastewater solutions, and town center revitalization. M. Letorney offered to attend in place of S. Jensen.

2019 Community Survey Results

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed the survey results.

2020 Town Plan – Chapters 5

The Planning Commission reviewed and revised Chapter 5.

2019 Work Plan & Project Updates

The Planning Commission reviewed and revised their work plan.

Minutes of the May 6, 2019 Meeting

W. Doane MOVED to approve the minutes.

S. Jensen SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 4 – 0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:49 p.m.

Submitted by,
Melissa Manka, Westford Planning Coordinator