

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MINUTES FOR MARCH 3, 2020 MEETING
Approved on April 14, 2020**

Commission/Board Members Present: Koi Boynton Gordon Gebauer, Seth Jensen, George Lamphere and Mark Letorney.

Commission/Board Members Absent:

Also, Present Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator), Ira Allen and Joe Klemm.

The meeting began at: 6:36 p.m.

Amendments to Agenda

No amendments proposed.

Citizens to be Heard & Announcements

Ira Allen said he disliked the location and bulk of the new store. He feels its too big and shuts out the White Church from the Common. He also stated he didn't understand the reasoning behind placing parking in the back and shopper access in the front of the building. He is concerned with the effect this development and future development will have on the Common and visualizes the Common hemmed in by structures, which disappoints him.

Joe Klemm had questions about the wastewater system.

G. Gebauer noted that the Commission would be discussing the wastewater system on March 16th and the Town Plan that evening.

There was discussion about what was included in the Town Plan and how it is developed and adopted.

J. Klemm said he would like the Town to put more information about the wastewater project on FPF for transparency and public understanding.

G. Gebauer said a large public outreach campaign is planned. However, its early days and they are still in the process of collecting the information needed for the public to make an informed decision.

J. Klemm said individuals travel through town and do not stop to shop and socialize. He suggested it would be a better use of taxpayer money to pave the roads rather than construct a wastewater system.

S. Jensen said reconstructing road base and paving typically costs one million dollars per mile. He added that the conceptual wastewater cost estimates were on the town website and came in at two million dollars. He added they are currently investigating funding options, which included TIFs and CWSRF grants. He said more answers are needed prior to going before the voters and the Commission would never ask the voters to bear the full cost. He noted that this project is not only about diversifying community amenities and services and growing the grand list but also finding a wastewater solution for the library and town offices, which will be required when the existing system under the parking lot fails. He noted that in 2015 the septic tank serving the library collapsed and the White Church spent thousands of dollars this past summer in order to

maintain and repair the existing holding tank serving the building. He noted that functioning wastewater systems will be required for the future use of historic village structures.

J. Klemm asked why the zoning didn't prohibit profanity and junk.

G. Gebauer said the Commission has been asked to investigate those issues, but there are constitutional rights such as freedom of speech and expression that need to be considered.

S. Jensen said the Commission would review the town's sign language based on the latest US Supreme Court decision when amending the regulations.

Minutes of the February 10, 2020 Meeting

G. Lamphere MOVED to approve the minutes as amended.

S. Jensen SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 4 – 0.

K. Boynton abstained.

Minutes of the February 17, 2020 Meeting

S. Jensen MOVED to approve the minutes as amended.

G. Lamphere SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 5 – 0.

Draft 2020 Westford Town Plan – Chapters 7 & 8

The Planning Commission reviewed Chapter 7 and began review of Chapter 8 of the draft 2020 Town Plan. The Commission will pick up Chapter 8 at their next meeting dedicated to the Town Plan.

Draft 2020 Westford Town Plan – Maps 8, 9 & 9a

The Planning Commission will review maps at their next meeting dedicated to the Town Plan.

Draft 2020 Westford Town Plan Work Plan & Timeline

The Planning Commission briefly reviewed the Town Plan Work Plan.

2020 Work Plan

The Planning Commission reviewed and made minor revisions to the Work Plan.

Action Plan

The Planning Commission will review the Action Plan at their next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 p.m.

Submitted by,
Melissa Manka, Westford Planning Coordinator