

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 1, 2021 MEETING**

Approved on February 15, 2021

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

Also, Present Melissa Manka (Town Planner), Liz Curry (Grant Writing Consultant), Lee McClenny (Resident), Louella & Daniel Strobridge.

The meeting began at: 6:33pm

Amendments to Agenda: None

Liz Curry, Grant Writer Discussion: Seth reviewed grants that the town is considering and funding strategies and challenges. Melissa provided overview of projects, existing funding, and timelines for both the wastewater and 1705 project. Liz will look at Northern Borders more closely. She also suggested the ACCD certified local government. program. Seth agreed that the program would be a good fit for Common Hall and the Brick Meeting House. Liz asked whether the income threshold for USDA Community Facilities grants was problematic for Westford. The PC confirmed and stated the funding mix that seems to fit the wastewater project is the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (process already started with PER), Northern Borders (focus on new development), a project based TIF program being proposed in the legislature. In order to bring Liz up to speed and provide her with some more information on costs, Melissa will send her the PER. George and Seth will meet with Liz on the green next week to talk through wastewater and the 1705 property.

Citizens to be Heard, Announcements, Correspondence & Other Business: Louella and Daniel Strobridge joined the meeting for the review of campground language in the Land Use & Development Regulations. Lee McClenny joined to listen in and learned. He will be running for Selectboard and is in the process of educating himself.

Minutes of January 19, 2021 review:

VOTE: Gordon makes a motion to move the minutes as amended.

George seconds the motion.

The motion passed: 4 to 0.

Westford Land Use & Development Regulation Amendments - Campgrounds: Melissa introduced the draft language and where it will appear in Ch. 2, 3, & 5. Daniel Strobridge asked if we had looked at the state language. We did look at that language. There was discussion regarding number of parcels and permitting requirements. Melissa stated that she would reach

out to the state permit specialist to get more information. Seth pointed out that, in developing draft language, he focused more on the state wastewater rules and trying to ensure a simple review vs. a hearing process for small campgrounds. The draft language would make it possible for a landowner to test out an early-stage business without a huge investment and is similar to the state's campground rules in that way. Louella Strobbridge pointed out that it is their goal to keep the land as natural as possible and we should consider if this is also the intent of the town. In order to keep campgrounds focused on primitive camping, we will have a separate definition for large campgrounds. The PC discussed campgrounds being a permitted use in R10 and R5. The village will be left out for now because it is more complicated language to draft. The use table will define small campgrounds as permitted and large campgrounds as conditional uses. This would allow us to define number of campsites that would require additional review. Campsite structures were discussed, and it was decided to include "without hookups". Melissa communicated we were in a good place for her to draft the language for campgrounds.

Westford Land Use & Development Regulation Amendments -Ch 1 & 2: It was decided by the PC to not review Ch. 1 & 2 this evening but to move onto priorities for completing the WLUDR amendments before construction season. There was a short discussion on nonconforming uses. George asked everyone to review the language he drafted with Taylor and offer feedback on the percentages. Gordon asked for clarification on nonconforming uses and nonconforming structures. The example was offered regarding a gas station – a gas station in a certain district could be a nonconforming use but if that gas station extends a setback or is taller than allowed, it would be a nonconforming structure.

Westford Land Use & Development Regulation Amendments – Priority & Amendment Plan: In order to meet the construction season deadline, the PC should only focus on the citizen requested amendments. DRB, Kate, and Melissa priority amendments should be put off until round 4. Melissa feels like the WLUDR is in a good place for her to offer a draft for the March meeting. The PC's March 2nd meeting will focus on draft review, regulation format, and language only. All PC members need to review the draft language before the March 2nd meeting. Once the final draft is ready, the public hearing can be warned.

InDesign Regulation Transfer – Cost Estimate Contract: The estimate is not in place, but Melissa will research whether to move forward on this project or wait until after the 4th round of amendments in order to save time. And meet the PC's deadline.

Newsletter/FPF Article: George will work on the February newsletter article. Some topics of interest might include introduction to Liz Curry, link to new webpage, the regulatory amendments as well as the Town Plan. George will provide a draft for review for the next PC meeting.

2021 Workplan: February 10th is the CCRPC PAC review of the Westford Town Plan. The SB public hearing for Town Plan is February 25th. Melissa has asked the SB to adopt the plan at the

same meeting. At the next PC meeting will cover wastewater and 1705 property and there is lots to review.

Wrap up & Next Meeting: S33 is the new TIF bill. Seth will be testifying next Thursday. TIF progress seems to be moving well.

Meeting adjourned: 8:30 pm

ACTION ITEMS:

- Melissa will send Liz Curry the PER.
- George and Seth will set up meeting with Liz.
- Melissa will work on WLUD draft for March.
- Commissioners will review draft prior to March 2nd meeting.