

WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes
August 19, 2009

Present: Hal Pyke, Joe D'Anna, Glenn Seward, Barbara Truex, Tom Kennedy

1. Call to Order - Chair Hal Pyke called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.
2. Changes or Additions – Energy Coordinator position: The Planning Commission agreed to invite Win Johnson and Ted Emerson to the Planning Commission's next meeting to talk about the position and about the possibility of forming an Energy Committee.
3. West Windsor Town Plan - Review revisions to Municipal Services & Government chapter: The PC reviewed the draft language for Chapter 4 of the Town Plan and made some additional changes. Review draft of Housing chapter: Tom suggested that the Housing chapter mention some of the different programs that towns can use to reduce the cost of housing. Tom said the difference between a house and a dwelling unit should be made clear. Tom said the PC should revisit the example provided in the text about how much house someone making the median salary can afford. Tom suggested not referring to specific zoning districts in the Town Plan. Tom said it would be helpful to include a statement that the PC supports the development of affordable housing that is consistent with the character of the town. Hal said he thinks there will eventually be a need to run the sewer line into the village and there may be a need to create a utility district together with Windsor. Tom agreed that having the sewer line on West Windsor's doorstep is an asset. Glenn said the sewer line is one thing that would really change the character of this town. Hal agreed that running sewer lines supports development and, therefore, causes anxiety. Barbara said that, at their last meeting, the PC talked about looking at sites near the sewer line for their housing potential, but also looking at increasing the supply of accessory dwelling units. Barbara said there are 205 houses in West Windsor appraised at less than \$245,000 so there is some affordable housing stock here. Barbara said she just doesn't see major affordable housing developments in Brownsville. Tom said if you're not increasing the housing stock, where will increased school enrollment come from; you're hoping for migration. Barbara disagreed. Barbara said relaxing the size restrictions on accessory dwelling units would help. Tom said there is gentrification happening in the Reading/West Windsor/Hartland area and second-home owners don't want to develop an accessory unit; they're just here for the tranquility of the area. Tom said he doesn't think relaxing the restrictions on accessory dwelling units will do much to improve the affordable housing situation in West Windsor. Barbara said she thinks older folks might like providing an apartment for a young couple who, in exchange for low rent, would provide some manual labor (mowing the lawn, chopping wood, etc.). Glenn agreed. Tom asked how many permits for accessory dwelling units have been issued in the last 5 years. Hal said he doesn't think there have been many. Barbara said she thinks that may have to do with the 30% size restriction. Barbara said she thinks the square footage ought to depend on the capacity of the land. Tom said in small communities he's trying to allay people's fears about affordable housing; it's possible to create affordable housing that people won't even know is affordable. Tom said he feels strongly that West Windsor and surrounding communities have a responsibility to provide some affordable housing for teachers, fire fighters, police officers and other working folks. Tom said because the cost

of land is critical, smaller parcels are essential for the development of affordable housing. Glenn said he thinks the PC came up with some good, realistic ideas at their last meeting. Tom said he just thinks the PC should include a stronger statement of support for affordable housing that is in keeping with the character of the town. The PC agreed. Tom encouraged the PC to strengthen the housing policy statements in the Town Plan. Barbara said the town should assess the need for various types of housing in West Windsor. Barbara said accessory dwelling units could help address both affordable housing and senior housing issues. Tom suggested that the Town Plan include a statement that the PC will ask the regional planning commission and the Rockingham Area Land Trust to assist in the development of a housing plan. Tom added that the PC has some good ideas.

4. Approve Minutes – August 5, 2009: **Barbara made a motion to approve the minutes of August 5, 2009, as written. Glenn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
5. Adjourn – **Glenn made a motion to adjourn at 8:14 PM. Barbara seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison