

## WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

June 30, 2010

Present: Hal Pyke, Elvin Kaplan, Al Keiller, Mark Isenberg, Barbara Truex, Martha Harrison, Glenn Seward, Phil Arvidson, Bruce Boedtger, Cathy Boedtger, Tom Kenyon, Johnny Jones, Ted Emerson, Dennis Brown

1. Call to Order – Chair Hal Pyke called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.
2. Changes or Additions – Martha noted that Phil Mallon has withdrawn his subdivision application so the Planning Commission (PC) does not need to review it for conformance with the Town Plan.
3. Public Hearing: 2010 West Windsor Town Plan – Hal opened the public hearing on the 2010 Town Plan. Phil Arvidson gave each member of the PC a list of written comments. Barbara noted that the census data referenced is from the 2000 census, which is the most recent census available. Phil suggested using stronger language with regards to development in the floodplain. Cathy said she supports the statement, on page 12, that there shall be no development other than infrastructure in Mile Long Field but she feels that the reference on page 13 which begins “if development is proposed for the area...” contradicts the statement on page 12. Hal said a road and water and sewer lines are the only development that would be allowed in Mile Long Field. Al suggested inserting the word “infrastructure” prior to the word “development” on page 13. Hal agreed. Referring to the talc plant, Tom suggested adding the word “property” to the end of Land Use Policy #6. Phil suggested eliminating Land Use Recommendation #9, which would allow increased density in the Secondary Growth district. Bruce agreed with Phil. Hal said the PC will consider that suggestion. Regarding Land Use Policy #10, regarding adverse impacts from the Resort, Tom suggested adding “or the town” at the end of the sentence. Phil suggested adding a statement to the second paragraph on page 16 requiring developers to pay for any additional utilities required by their development. Bruce said many towns require developers to build the required infrastructure and the town inspects it. Bruce said he thinks the town should look into a community wastewater system in addition to, or instead of, an extension of the sewer line. Phil said he thinks a sewer feasibility study should include political and economic issues as well as technical issues. Under the “internet section” on page 18, Phil suggested including Verizon. Phil said if the town could expand broadband, that would have a greater impact than anything else the town could accomplish in improving the economics of the town, by enabling the town to attract “clean” businesses. Regarding law enforcement, Johnny Jones asked who the Special Officer would report to. Glenn Seward said the Special Officer would report directly to the Selectboard. Johnny asked what powers the Special Officer would have. Glenn said the Special Officer would have full law enforcement powers as dictated by the Criminal Justice Training Council. Hal noted Phil’s written comment that paper ballots are sometimes required when the outcome of a voice vote is too close to call. Tom said cemetery maintenance costs are increasing. Hal said the PC could note that budgetary authority for the Sheddsville Cemetery rests with the Selectboard. Phil said the cemetery authority should charge fees sufficient to cover maintenance costs. There was discussion about the need to consider raising cemetery fees. There was discussion about softening the language regarding the relocation of the town sand pile. Ted Emerson suggested building a bulkhead to contain the sand. Several people thought that was a good suggestion. Cathy suggested including mountain biking in the list of activities taking place in the town forest. Cathy was also concerned about including hang gliding in the list of activities, given the potential liability.

There was discussion about whether the launch site is on town property or not. The PC agreed to remove reference to hang gliding from the Town Plan. Cathy said she was surprised by the statement that the Conservation Commission oversees maintenance of the Bicentennial Trail. Elsewhere, Cathy said, the Town Plan indicates that both the Conservation Commission and the Town Forest Committee maintain the trail. Hal said the PC will clarify that. Barbara questioned the town's authority to specify the types of bags used for recyclables. The PC agreed to remove that recommendation from the Solid Waste section. Regarding the Education chapter, Phil asked about the possibility of Albert Bridge School being modified to allow a cafeteria to facilitate possible future consolidation among area schools. Hal said the Selectboard had a discussion with the school board about capacity, and one of the issues that the Wastewater Committee should consider is the future water and wastewater needs of the school. Barbara said it is difficult for a small school to break even on a cafeteria. Ted asked if Reading Elementary has a cafeteria program. Phil said he was told that they do. Tom said the town does have limited control over rising secondary tuition costs and suggested changing the wording in the fourth paragraph. Regarding the reference to hang gliding in Chapter 6, Elvin said it would be important to know whose property the takeoff platform is on. Hal agreed. Bruce suggested making sure that the language in the Town Plan is consistent with state regulations on wetlands and riparian buffers. Elvin asked if there are regulations on ponds. Tom said yes. Regarding steep slopes, Cathy asked where the percentages come from. Glenn said the 15% for driveways is from the B-71 Standard. Bruce suggested that the Town Plan refer to the Mile Long Field area, rather than just the field itself. Glenn suggested including "and associated acreage" after Mile Long Field on pages 35 and 37. Ted asked if the field is privately owned. Hal said yes. Ted said if the owners of the field wanted to put residential construction in the field would that put them in conflict with the Planning Board. Hal said yes. Glenn said he doesn't think "conflict" is the right word, but it would encourage additional scrutiny. Ted said he thinks the tax assessment on Mile Long Field should reflect the constraints on development. Mark agreed with Ted. Hal said Mile Long Field is designated as a conservation area both in the zoning regulations and the town Plan. Martha said Mile Long Field is very specifically defined in the zoning regulations, by metes and bounds. Phil said he thinks the settlement agreement between the town and the Resort included the "associated acreage" not just the field itself. Glenn said he thinks the "associated acreage" could be developed with 5-acre lots and on-site septic or with one-acre lots connected to the sewer system. Hal said that sounds familiar. Mark asked if the owner agreed to forego development on the field itself in order to have access across the field. Hal said yes. Tom said he doesn't believe the intent is to have an open field with houses all the way around it. Bruce agreed. All agreed to check the definition of Mile Long Field in the zoning bylaws. Ted asked about Scenic Area Policy #2 which encourages consideration of the town's heritage when designing structures, including solar arrays. Ted asked if he would have to get zoning board approval before doing any solar installations. The PC agreed that the policy *encourages* consideration, but does not require it. Mark said he thinks the policy was meant to address free-standing structures, not panels on a roof. Bruce said free-standing structures are regulated by the public service board. Ted suggested adding ancient roads to the list of historic resources. The PC noted that ancient roads are mentioned in the narrative section on historic resources and agreed that that is sufficient. Bruce asked if the historic resources listed in the Town Plan are also listed with the state. Tom said yes. Cathy asked about the suggestion, in the Transportation chapter, that the town consider reclassifying ancient roads as legal trails. There was discussion about "ancient roads" being an imprecise term. Bruce said "unidentified corridors" are the ones that cease to exist after July 1, 2010 if they are not on the map. Other roads that are not on the map have to be identified as Class 4

roads by a certain deadline or they're gone too. Regarding bicycle and pedestrian facilities, Tom said the Town Plan recommendation to widen the shoulder on Route 44 between Seems Road and the Post Office is going to happen this summer. Martha said her son had an accident on that section of Route 44 yesterday, on the south side where the shoulder is not going to be expanded, which made her realize that expanding the shoulder on the north side only solves half the problem since bicycles heading east have to use the south side of the road. Tom said the problem with the south side is that there are telephone poles in the way. Martha asked about making Transportation Policy #2 a recommendation for action rather than a policy. The PC agreed. Regarding affordable housing, Tom said given that the minimum cost of building a new house is \$200,000, he doesn't know how West Windsor is going to address affordable housing. Hal said one of the recommendations is to establish ½ - acre lots at the east end of the village. Ted asked if there is any regulation to keep them affordable. Hal said not that he knows. Barbara noted that there are 206 houses in town that are appraised at \$246,000 or less, which is considered affordable for West Windsor based on the average income. Hal said the value of condos has decreased a lot since the town-wide reappraisal in 2006. In response to Ted's question about regulations to keep housing affordable, Martha said there is a recommendation to consider "restrictions to keep new housing units affordable at moderate income levels." Martha said the PC has considered a size restriction, not a restriction on resale price. Barbara agreed that the PC talked quite a bit about lot coverage. Phil suggested clarifying Housing Policy #4 and #7 and Housing Recommendation #3. The PC agreed. Regarding economic development, Phil suggested including health care as one of the primary employment areas. The PC agreed. Phil said the second paragraph under Tourism/Vacation Home Development seems inconsistent with some of the earlier statements in the town plan. Barbara said the PC felt that they should acknowledge that if the bulk of the vacation homes in town were to become permanent residences, it could really put pressure on the school system. The PC agreed to make Economic Development Recommendation #1 consistent with other similar recommendations on wastewater treatment in the Town Plan. Regarding the implementation tools listed in Chapter 13, Phil said the town has a capital budget and the town plan should indicate that. Hal agreed that the town has an equipment budget but does not have a budget for town buildings and renovations. Hal noted that the PC is suggesting that map #3 and map #4 be revised. Copies of the maps showing the proposed revisions were available for review. Martha said the version of map #3 that was distributed with the public hearing draft didn't show any publicly or privately conserved land so, after a long conversation with Sue Greenall, April Harkness came up with a new draft of map #3. Martha said public land is considered conserved because it's publicly owned. Cathy questioned whether it would hold up in a court as being conserved just because it's publicly owned. Martha said the map isn't meant to preclude the town from legally conserving public land. Martha said the version of map #4 that was distributed with the draft of the Town Plan showed the floodplains in the north part of town as wetlands rather than floodplains; the proposed revision shows them as floodplains. The PC accepted the proposed changes to the maps. As there were no more public comments on the Town Plan, **Barbara made a motion to close the public hearing. Elvin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

4. Discuss post-hearing changes to 2010 Town Plan (if any) and approve submission of Plan to Selectboard – The PC discussed the changes suggested by the public and agreed that most of them were reasonable. Specifically, the PC agreed to eliminate Land Use Recommendation #9 on increased density in the Secondary Growth district. The PC also revised the wording on the feasibility of a community wastewater system. Regarding hang gliding, Hal suggested eliminating all such references from the Town Plan. The PC agreed. The PC discussed the

process for approving a final draft for submission to the Selectboard and agreed to meet on Wednesday, July 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM. The PC also agreed not to meet on July 21<sup>st</sup>.

5. Other Business - None
6. Approve Minutes: May 19, 2010 – **Barbara made a motion to approve the minutes of May 19, 2010. Elvin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
7. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned without objection at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison