

WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes
November 4, 2009

Present: Joe D'Anna, Barbara Truex, Glenn Seward, Mark Isenberg, Hal Pyke, Martha Harrison

1. Call to Order – Vice Chair Barbara Truex called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.
2. Additions/Changes – Barbara asked if the date of the next meeting could be changed.
3. Prepare for Upcoming Energy forum – The Planning Commission (PC) deferred this topic until Tom Kennedy or April Harkness arrives.
4. West Windsor Town Plan: Review & update Economic Development Chapter – The PC agreed to leave the introduction as is. The PC agreed to update the information about high-speed internet service under “Encouraging Home-based Businesses.” Martha asked the PC if the town wants to do anything about its lack of infrastructure, particularly a public sewer system. Barbara said she thinks a public sewer is “pie in the sky.” Glenn said he did some calculations based on the assumption that the sewer extension would cost the town \$1,500,000. Glenn said borrowing that amount for ten years at 2.5% would add \$200 per year to everybody’s tax bill for ten years. Barbara said that’s including all the people who don’t get any benefit from it. Martha said that, according to Tom Kennedy, there are grants available. Barbara said anyone who hooked up would have a monthly sewer bill and how much would they want to pay. Mark said the monthly sewer bills would be offset by savings on a septic system so he doesn’t think that would be prohibitive. Mark said a sewer system would enable medium density affordable housing. Barbara suggested strengthening the recommendation on the sewer line to specify that the town should get estimates on the cost and survey the people who would be served by it. Glenn suggested that the town seek funding for an engineering study to determine the feasibility of a sewer line. Joe said the presence of a sewer line might encourage some new businesses. Glenn said he wonders if people want new businesses in town. Barbara questioned whether the population is large enough to support additional businesses. Barbara said she’s sure the town will continue to support agriculture but it’s not without its problems (e.g. pollution). Martha noted that current use has increased the number of acres in agriculture and forestry. The PC agreed to note that under “Agriculture as a Business.” Martha agreed to check on the percentage of seasonal housing units. The PC agreed to keep the paragraphs about the positive and negative aspects of vacation home development. The PC agreed that much of the information about the Ascutney Mountain Resort is outdated and should be removed or updated. Everyone agreed that Orange Lake’s involvement with the Resort should also be included. The PC agreed that the Commercial-Industrial Areas section of the chapter needs to be rewritten to note that the talc plant is not being used and the reclamation of the tailings area has not happened yet. Joe asked about Luzenac’s legal obligation to complete the reclamation. Glenn said he thinks the reclamation should be a priority for Act 250. Martha said the Act 250 process was derailed for about three years pending additional information. The PC agreed to find out about the current status of the reclamation project. Joe asked if the sentence about the townspeople wanting little or no industrial growth is correct. The PC agreed that industrial growth should be limited to the industrial district. The PC reviewed the minutes from the Economic Development Forum. Hal said the PC should reconsider the sewer line and think about allowing businesses in residential areas. Barbara said the cost of a

sewer line would be a considerable burden on the tax payers and we don't know how many people would want to hook up. Hal said the town can just require people to hook up when their septic systems fail. Barbara said the PC agreed that the town should investigate the feasibility of extending the sewer line. Hal agreed that a feasibility study should be conducted. Barbara said the PC is unanimously reluctant to open up residential areas to non-owner occupied businesses. Hal agreed. Glenn said he thinks the town plan should encourage home businesses where the owner lives on the premises. Joe asked about the use of the old Mt. Ascutney School. Hal said the former owner got a permit to convert it into four condo units, but he doesn't know the new owner's plans. Barbara asked if the sewer line serves that property. Hal said no, the sewer line is across the road and up the hill. The PC reviewed the Economic Development Policies and Recommendations and agreed to eliminate Policy #5. There was discussion about town policy with regards to the Resort. The PC agreed that the town plan should encourage responsible resort development that is sensitive to the fact that the town provides limited services. Hal noted that most of the recommendations are actually policies. Glenn suggested seeking funding for a sewer line feasibility study as an action item. The PC agreed to add "Conduct a comprehensive sewer line feasibility study for the village area" as an action item in both Chapter 3 and Chapter 11.

5. Correspondence: Dennis & Nancy Brown – Hal said he received a request from the Browns that the Planning Commission confirm that their subdivision is consistent with the Town Plan. Hal said he didn't see anything in the town plan that would be negative with regard to this subdivision. Hal agreed to draft a letter to that effect on behalf of the Planning Commission.
6. Other Business – Reschedule next PC meeting: The PC agreed to change the next meeting to Monday, November 16th at 6:30 PM. Energy Forum: The PC agreed to ask the Energy Committee if they would work with the Regional Planning Commission to organize the forum. Barbara said it would be helpful to know about any state regulations that are in the works with regard to solar panels, wind turbines, and the like. Wind Turbine on Mt. Ascutney: Glenn said Steve Plaustein told him that someone has approached him about putting a turbine adjacent to the mid-mountain pump station. Glenn said Steve agreed to keep the town apprised as things develop.
7. Approve Minutes - October 7, 2009: **Barbara made a motion to approve the minutes of October 7, 2009, as written. Joe seconded the motion, which passed with Glenn abstaining.** October 21, 2009: **Barbara made a motion to approve the minutes of October 21, 2009, as written. Joe seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
8. Adjourn – **Mark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. Joe seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison