

## WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes  
October 7, 2009

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

1. Call to Order - Chair Hal Pyke called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
2. Changes or Additions – Solar panels: Barbara asked Martha if we're supposed to have something in the Town Plan about solar panels. Barbara said there was a question about whether the Development Review Board (DRB) would have any jurisdiction over alternative energy structures. Martha said the DRB does not have jurisdiction as far as she can tell. Barbara asked what the Public Service Board (PSB) uses as its guidelines. Martha said the PSB sends a copy of the application to the town and the Planning Commission (PC) or the Selectboard may comment on it. Martha said West Windsor's Town Plan seems to support renewable energy resources except for commercial wind projects so she thinks the town would have a hard time saying anything negative about a solar project. Barbara said it's conceivable that someone could fill an entire meadow with a solar array. Hal said the state would have to approve it. Martha suggested that the PC include some standards in the Town Plan that specify support for projects that are on a small or residential scale. Hal noted that Vermont is a "Dillon state" and towns are limited by the state in what they can do.
3. Discuss upcoming Economic Development Forum – Hal said he spoke with Tom Kennedy about changing the focus of the forum from the ski industry to general economic development. The PC reviewed the draft flyer and made minor changes to some of the questions.
4. West Windsor Town Plan: Review & update Natural Resources chapter – The PC talked about vernal pools and noted that they are mentioned under wetlands. Mark said that, at an earlier meeting, the PC agreed to include a map of vernal pools in the Town Plan. Hal said he doesn't think the Selectboard will want to spend a lot of funds identifying vernal pools. Hal noted that Martha looks for wetlands when she inspects a property in connection with an application for a zoning permit. Martha said since she is not a Wetland Ecologist she refers property owners to the state or the Army Corps if they are proposing to build in an area that looks like a possible wetland. Barbara asked if the town requires wetlands to be flagged. Martha said the town does require a buffer but has not required that the wetland be delineated although if the construction were going to be close, it would probably have to be delineated. Martha said the wetland buffer is 50 feet but it would only apply to a vernal pool if the pool is considered a wetland. Hal said according to the definition in the Town Plan, a vernal pool is a wetland. Martha said if it's a small vernal pool, it's probably not going to be on the state map and the Army Corps is not going to care about it so it would be up to the town to protect it. Barbara noted that April Harkness was going to provide some language on primary agricultural soils and fluvial erosion management. All agreed. The PC talked about reworking the surface waters section. Mark didn't think that was necessary. Martha said the most important thing, if we care about our natural resources, is to take whatever specific steps we need to take to protect them in a JAM Golf situation. Hal said he thinks that's why the PC should look carefully at the natural resource policies. The PC agreed to summarize

the long paragraph about the various tests and studies that have been done on Mill Brook over the years. Mark suggested consulting April to see if any more recent testing has been done or if she could suggest surface water language. Mark suggested that one of the action items be to definitively monitor pollutants in our surface waters. Mark said the Conservation Commission is going to review this chapter and may have some suggestions. Martha said she doesn't think the way the chapter is written right now would protect anything because it is not concrete enough. Mark said we could annotate the policy statements with specific references to local, state, and federal regulations. Martha said that would help although the Town Plan would have extremely lengthy footnotes. The PC reviewed the natural resource policies and recommendations and clarified or eliminated several. Barbara noted that agricultural uses are sometimes in conflict with natural resource protection. The PC reviewed the Wildlife Habitat section, including the policies and recommendations, and made a few changes to the recommendations. The PC felt that the Scenic Areas narrative effectively conveys the overriding philosophy of West Windsor and does not need editing. In the second scenic area policy, Barbara suggested including solar arrays and windmills as examples of specific types of utility installation. The PC agreed. Hal suggested expanding on that in the Energy chapter. The PC consolidated several of the Scenic Area Recommendations. Martha said there is language to protect ridgelines in the subdivision regulations. Mark asked what a ridgeline is. Martha read the definition. The PC reviewed the Historic Resources section of the Natural Resources chapter and discussed whether historic resources and cemeteries should have buffers beyond the setbacks required in the zoning regulations. The PC agreed that the zoning setbacks are adequate. The PC reviewed the Historic Resource Policies and Recommendations, eliminated a couple of them and recommended that a map of local historic sites be created and possibly combined with an existing trail map.

5. Approve Minutes – September 16, 2009: **Mark made a motion to approve the minutes of September 16, 2009, as written. Joe seconded the motion, which passed with Barbara abstaining.**
6. Other Business – Hal said he checked with Jill Delaney about the use of pesticides by horse facilities and she said they don't use them. Hal also reported that Tom Kenyon is trying to get the town to build a concrete block wall to keep the town sand pile out of the road.
7. Adjourn – **Mark made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 PM. Barbara seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison