

WEST WINDSOR SELECTBOARD

Draft Minutes

June 1, 2010

Present: Tom Kenyon, Glenn Seward, Bruce Boedtke, Sue D'Anna, Erik Schutz, Ed Connors, Hal Pyke, Martha Harrison

- 1) Call to Order – Selectboard Chair Glenn Seward called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
- 2) Discuss issues of mutual concern with West Windsor School Board – Glenn said in regards to school consolidation, he is concerned about the school's wastewater capacity if the school should increase in size and how that might relate to an extension of the sewer line. Glenn said there is money available for feasibility studies for sewer extensions. Sue said the school board is still sorting out the ramifications of the recently passed legislation. Sue said there are some tax incentives for schools that become part of a unified district and some changes would have to be made to meet the criteria. Sue said there are currently about 80 students at Albert Bridge School (ABS) and she doesn't see a significant change in that number in the foreseeable future. Sue said the current septic capacity will accommodate 133 people. Sue added that she doesn't think the building itself has capacity for that many people without making some changes. Sue said West Windsor has reached out to the Reading School Board about mutually beneficial ways in which the two towns might collaborate. Sue said she doesn't think shared programs or shared staff between the two towns would result in a big change in the number of people using the school, so she doesn't see a huge need for increased septic capacity. On the other hand, Sue said, if we have the ability to connect to a sewer system, it would make sense to explore that. Glenn said septic systems have life spans. Erik said if the current mound system were not there, the space could be used for additional outdoor recreation facilities. Glenn said there are considerable implications for running a sewer line into town relating to increased development and that has to be weighed along with the necessity of providing the school and town buildings with adequate wastewater disposal. Sue said she doesn't think school officials feel limited at all by the school's current septic system. Tom asked if ABS has the capacity to absorb Reading's intermediate level students. Sue said yes, but she thinks Reading is invested in keeping their school open. Sue added that Reading and West Windsor belong to different supervisory unions and West Windsor students have secondary school choice, while Reading students do not, so there are some issues that would have to be worked out. Bruce said the life span of a septic system varies greatly depending on maintenance. Erik said ABS does not have a kitchen or cafeteria because of the limited septic capacity. Glenn asked if the school would like to have a cafeteria if there were adequate septic capacity. Sue said they would consider it. Tom asked how many years it would take to put a sewer system in the village. Bruce said he thinks it would take about two years. Glenn said he is interested in getting funding for a feasibility study. Glenn asked Sue if she has a sense of where the consolidation movement is headed. Sue said she thinks that, within the next six months, the town will be required to have a formal conversation about whether we are interested in pursuing consolidation. Sue said the supervisory union is having an open meeting with their attorney to discuss the implications of the recent legislation. Tom asked if West Windsor's middle and high school students could be forced to go to Windsor. Sue said she doesn't think so; the school choice lobby was very vocal during the debates on the recent legislation. Sue said the legislation allows schools to become a unified district without eliminating school choice for those towns that have it. Sue said right now each of the four schools in the supervisory union gets three votes on the supervisory union board, regardless of the size of the school. Sue said if the four schools in the supervisory union become a "unified district," the structure of the supervisory union board could change and West Windsor could "lose its voice." Sue said the supervisory union's open meeting with its attorney is on June 23rd at 6:00 PM. Tom noted that bridge #7 will need to be replaced at some point in the future and it would be nice to coordinate the bridge reconstruction with the sewer line expansion, if we decide to proceed. Hal said it's important for the town to do the study that is called for in the Town Plan because there is

not much taxable property to support a sewer system. Hal said it may turn out that, unless we get some affordable housing, we won't be able to do it unless the state decrees that we have to put in a sewer system. Hal said he'd love to see a sewer system in town because it would solve the problems of the houses along the brook. Tom said his understanding is that the Resort has reserved capacity at the Windsor Treatment Plant. Hal said Windsor, West Windsor and the Resort could set up an independently managed "sewer district." There was discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of existing and alternative sewer arrangements. Energy Audit: Erik said that David Jaacks had approached the school board about an energy audit. Glenn said apparently there was an energy audit done on the school a few years ago and the Energy Committee would like to get a copy of it so they can determine if they need to get another audit done or not. Glenn said it would be very helpful if the school board could find it and share it with the Committee. Susan said if they can't find it in their files, they'll track it down at the Department of Education. Susan said she has a report on savings that could be achieved through lighting changes. Tom asked how an increasing student enrollment affects the budget. Susan said the "per pupil spending" is more favorable but it takes a couple of years before that kicks in. Ed said the "equalized pupil number" is a 3-year rolling average. Tom noted that the town is going to conduct another property reappraisal next year. Ed commented that real estate values have gone down. Erik said the Commissioner of Education has indicated that the state is going to do away with small school grants. Sue said Albert Bridge will lose about \$80,000 per year when the small schools grant is phased out. Ed said the state doesn't want to provide small schools that could merge with an incentive to stay separate. Bruce suggested that the school consider monitoring its water usage over the next year because, if they can demonstrate that they are using less than the system was designed for, they can add capacity without building a new system. Bruce said there are also new regulations for mound systems now that have a smaller footprint so it might be possible to rebuild the system on the same foot print and increase the capacity. Tom said the Cady lot, which was purchased by the town, could also provide an alternate location for a septic system if additional capacity is needed. There was discussion about the limitations on village development resulting from the lack of a sewer system, the need for a feasibility study, and the availability of funding to conduct such a study.

- 3) Other Business – The Selectboard signed a document authorizing the Constable to impound, or otherwise remove, unlicensed dogs.
- 4) Adjourn – **Tom made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 PM. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison