

## WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

June 7, 2012

Present: Hal Pyke, Al Keiller, Barbara Truex, Elvin Kaplan, Jason Rasmussen, Cathy Boedtke, Martha Harrison

1. Call to Order – Planning Commission Chair Hal Pyke called the meeting to order at 6:37 PM in the Albert Bridge School Library.
2. Changes or Additions – Jason briefly reviewed West Windsor’s Town Plan with the Planning Commission (PC). Jason gave the PC a handout with comments on the Town Plan from the Regional Planning Commission (RPC). Jason said the Agency of Commerce and Community Development requires the RPC to meet with every town that has a Town Plan. Towns with “approved” Town Plans are eligible for municipal planning grants, village center designation, and a few other things. The hand out had comments on how well West Windsor has complied with required elements and state planning goals. Jason said in general West Windsor’s town plan is good, although there are a few deficiencies that could be corrected at the same time that the Recreation and Economic Development chapters are being revised. Jason made the following suggestions: include narrative in the land use chapter on the affordable housing overlay, update the wastewater section once those issues are all figured out, consider identifying ridgelines, rethink the industrial area language, update the energy chapter to address recent legislation with regard to Section 248, clarify how the village area meets state planning goal #1, address vocational opportunities, address air pollution issues, and expand on mineral extraction in the natural resources chapter. Cathy Boedtke asked about legislation with regard to ridgelines. Jason said he will look into that. Jason asked the PC if the town has any training needs. Elvin said it would be helpful to have a clear statement about the state’s expectations for town plans. Martha said some training for the DRB might be helpful. Hal said he thinks the Energy Committee needs some direction. Elvin noted that the PC has not responded to the Energy Committee’s request for help. Martha noted that there are regional energy committee meetings that could be helpful. Cathy said there should be better communication among the various committees. Jason asked the PC if they have any interest in capital budgets. Hal said the PC needs guidance from the Selectboard. Al said the PC should have a five-year capital plan ready for January 1, 2013. There was discussion about the process of capital budget planning. Jason summarized the services offered by the RPC (grant writing, emergency planning, transportation planning, capital budgeting, FEMA project management, etc.) and asked what local issues, such as a regional police force, the RPC should be working on with the town. Barbara suggested that the RPC might be able to help establish a region-wide recreational trail network. Cathy Boedtke suggested regional mountain rescue planning. Martha said the sewer system is a multi-town issue. Joint committee meeting: Hal said he responded to Ted Siegler’s suggestion that there be a joint meeting of all committees by noting that the PC has its hands full right now but meeting minutes are available if any other committees want to know what the PC is working on. Barbara suggested having a different committee come to each PC meeting to share information.
3. Public Comment – None
4. Review draft recreation survey – Jason said he emailed the survey to the PC. Barbara suggested including the activities available at the resort. Everyone agreed. Hal suggested removing the summary of the public meeting on March 29<sup>th</sup> from the cover letter. Everyone agreed. Cathy said snowmobiles should be struck from the section on the town forest. Jason agreed. Al suggested encouraging people to take the survey on line for ease of compilation. Martha suggested that the cover letter focus on existing facilities and not steer people in one direction or the other by talking about the results of other surveys (e.g. the town forest survey). Al and Elvin disagreed. Cathy noted that the Town Forest Management Plan has been adopted by the Selectboard. The PC agreed to eliminate demographic information such as family income, age, etc. Jason noted that Ludlow had very different responses from seasonal residents versus year-round residents. The PC agreed to keep that question. Elvin

suggested including a question about the activities that people think would provide the greatest economic benefit to the town. Al agreed, and suggested an open-ended question. Hal said once we've narrowed down the interests, we can have public meetings focused on specific recreational activities. Al suggested adding "Playing on the playground" to the list of activities. Cathy noted that question #2 asks specifically about activities that people enjoy *in West Windsor*. Martha said if West Windsor is specified then we won't find out what activities people would enjoy doing in West Windsor if those activities were available. Al suggested using question #6 to find out what future facilities people would like to see in West Windsor. Hal was concerned about the length of the survey. Al said this is one of the shortest surveys he's ever seen. Cathy suggested removing the question about events that respondents have participated in. Barbara and Al agreed. Cathy noted that there was a lot of concern at the March 29<sup>th</sup> meeting about the fact that the school gym is not available to the public and suggested including a related question. Elvin said there was quite an interest in cultural events at the March 29<sup>th</sup> meeting and he doesn't see that reflected in the survey. After discussion, the PC agreed to include concerts, arts & crafts, and dancing under future recreational activities, and to ask about use of the town hall and the school gym. The PC talked about eliminating the question about whether or not the town should have a recreation coordinator or committee. Martha said that subject came up a lot at the March 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. Jason agreed. The PC eliminated the financial questions. Jason asked if there is information that we're not asking for that we should be asking for. Al noted that we never prepared a work plan with objectives, steps and expected outcomes. Barbara said she thinks we're looking for the key recreational activities that people might want to support over the next five years. Jason said he thinks we're also looking for the activities that might benefit the town economically. Martha said it might be helpful to find out what people's areas of expertise are and what they might be willing to volunteer to help with. Hal said he thinks we need to pursue the activities that have the greatest support and could ask for volunteers to help with those activities after we identify them. Al said the objective is to assess the activities that people currently participate in or would like to participate in, and the associated facilities. Elvin said he asked Glenn why the Selectboard asked the Planning Commission to come up with a Recreation Plan. According to Elvin, Glenn said that we have to develop our trail system for the economic wellbeing of the town. Elvin said we know that trails are the primary interest so we're asking a question that we already know the answer to. Martha said she would be surprised if skiing were not another primary interest. Elvin agreed. Jason said we need to get a better sense of the other activities that appeal to people. Al said he thought the objective was broader than validating the supposition that people are interested in the trail system. Elvin agreed that the objective is broader. Elvin said he thinks the survey is necessary but he thinks trail use will be the primary interest. Martha said it might be useful to find out, specifically, what activities people use the town forest trails for – hiking, biking, skiing, etc. The PC agreed. Jason said he will revise the survey and email it to the PC. There was discussion about the mailing process and mailing list. Jason said once we get the survey out, we can start working on economic development. Martha noted that there's not much about skiing in the survey. The PC discussed some minor changes related to skiing.

5. Minutes - March 29<sup>th</sup>: **Elvin made a motion to approve the minutes of March 29, 2012 as written. Al seconded the motion, which passed with Barbara abstaining. May 2<sup>nd</sup>: Barbara made a motion to approve the minutes of May 2, 2012 as written. Al seconded the motion, which passed with Elvin abstaining.**
6. Other Business – Al reported that he met today with Courtney McKaig, who has grant funding to study the "walkability" and "bikeability" of the village. Al said Courtney would like to coordinate her work with the PC's recreation study. Next meeting: Jun 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM
7. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison