

## WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

November 15, 2012

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

1. Call to Order – Planning Commission Chair Hal Pyke called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.
2. Changes or Additions – In reference to his pending resignation from the Planning Commission, Hal thanked everyone for their well wishes.
3. Public Comment – Glenn said the Selectboard, at their last meeting, discussed the need for a Recreation Director, which would be a volunteer position initially. Glenn said Cathy Boedtke has volunteered for the position and drafted a job description. Glenn gave the Planning Commission a copy of the job description and asked for their input as soon as possible. Al asked why the job would be a volunteer position and not a paid position. Glenn said there is no money for a paid position at the moment. Glenn added that he thinks it will be a paid position ultimately and it could be included in the 2013 budget but he thinks it may be an uphill battle. Hal said he thinks the Recreation Director should also serve on the Planning Commission. Al expressed concern that volunteer positions are not always valued appropriately. Glenn said he would like there to be a way for people to weigh in on the results of the Planning Commission's SWOT analysis. Barbara asked if the Recreation Director might be involved in discussions about alternative uses for the ski area (e.g. as a snowboarding park). Glenn said the current owner of the ski resort has committed to sitting down with the town and discussing "what we do with this" once he truly owns it. Al noted that the job description is very focused on economic development and he thinks it should be more precise and have more of a recreation focus. Al asked about the Selectboard's next step. Glenn said the Selectboard is prepared to act soon to establish this position. Hal said he thinks we need to enlist the support of key people in town. Hal added that we should not try to do too much too fast. Mark thanked Cathy for volunteering and offered to help. Elvin suggested gearing up with a winter trail activity. Glenn said we have the trails we just need to come up with the means of grooming them. Glenn said he sees a need to prepare for the coming "green" season. Cathy said we're restricted to four events by the Act 250 permit but it would be easy to do a snowshoe event in conjunction with Orange Lakes. Cathy noted a video about saving the Barnard General Store and suggested a video as a means of communicating the need for action. **Mark moved to give the Selectboard a preliminary recommendation to move forward with the position of Recreation & Economic Coordinator (REC). Elvin seconded the motion.** Al encouraged Glenn to expand the job description and put more recreation responsibilities into it. **Hal called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.** Glenn recommended Orange Lake as a resource to help with promotion and marketing. Barbara suggested asking Orange Lake what their clientele is looking for in terms of recreation. Cathy suggested a hand-out with a map showing visitors where to go and what to do. Mark mentioned the brochures available at the store. Cathy said it should be easy to quantify the potential return on investment based on the Vermont 50 and the Vermont 100. Martha said she thinks visitors may be confused about whether they're in Brownsville, West Windsor or Ascutney, which might be a problem. Elvin noted the recent discussion at Selectboard meetings about "Welcome to West Windsor" signs. Al suggested that the REC try to clarify the confusion about the town's identity.
4. Economic Development: Vision, Goals & Strategies – Al said we need to have specific metrics and accountability for our goals. Barbara was concerned about increasing school enrollment as a goal. Elvin suggested maintaining school enrollment instead. The PC agreed. The PC discussed Al's vision statement. There was debate about whether or not West Windsor should grow. The PC agreed that recreation is, and should be, the economic engine for the town. The PC discussed what should, and should not, be included in the Town Plan. The PC also discussed whether the Town Plan should be in narrative form or bullet form. The PC agreed that the vision and goals should be in the Town Plan,

which is a 5-year plan, but that there should also be a more detailed short-term plan with specific action items. Jason said the Town Plan plays a role in Act 250 hearings so the PC should take that into consideration. Jason added that state law requires town plans to include certain elements. The PC discussed specific actions to achieve the goal of promoting West Windsor's recreational facilities and events and increasing the number of events that draw visitors to West Windsor. The PC suggested hiring a recreation coordinator. Al suggested developing a table with strategies, tactics, responsible parties, metrics for success and timelines for each goal. There was discussion about how to improve cell phone and internet connectivity by supporting the efforts of EC Fiber to attract local investors. Al agreed to put together a spreadsheet and circulate it so everyone can fill in specific action items before the next meeting.

5. Minutes – September 13<sup>th</sup>: **Barbara moved to approve the minutes of September 13<sup>th</sup> as written. Mark seconded the motion, which passed with Al abstaining. October 10<sup>th</sup>: Barbara moved to approve the minutes of October 10<sup>th</sup> as written. Mark seconded the motion, which passed with Al abstaining. October 23<sup>rd</sup>: Mark moved to approve the minutes of October 23<sup>rd</sup> as written. Al seconded the motion, which passed with Barbara abstaining.**
6. Adjourn – **Mark moved to adjourn at 2:42 PM. Barbara seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison