

## WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes  
October 10, 2012

Present: Hal Pyke, Barbara Truex, Mark Isenberg, Jason Rasmussen, Martha Harrison

1. Call to Order – Planning Commission Chair Hal Pyke called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.
2. Changes or Additions – None
3. Public Comment – None
4. Discuss recreation survey results – The PC discussed the outcomes that were surprising, including the fact that snowmobiling did not make the top ten activities and playing on the playground did make the top ten. Martha noted that most people agree that existing facilities are adequate; the “facility” that was most frequently marked as inadequate was the cross-country ski trails. Martha said she was also surprised that town roads are the most frequently used recreational facility by a wide margin. Barbara said she thinks that outcome reinforces the town’s interest in keeping its dirt roads unpaved. Martha said it could also indicate a need for more signage alerting drivers to the presence of bikers, horses, etc. Jason said he is not surprised that “operating ski resort” was the facility that people want the most. Martha said she looked at that question to see if there were facilities where the “agrees” outnumbered the “disagrees” by more than 2:1, or vice versa. Martha said, looking at it that way, it would appear that people want: an operating ski resort, additional bike/pedestrian paths, extensions/connections of non-motorized trails, a sheltered picnic area/pavilion, and an adventure park. Martha said if you take non-resident responses out, the adventure park drops off the list of desired facilities. The facilities that people are negative about by more than 2:1 are a skateboarding park and ATV trails. If you take non-resident responses out, people are also negative about sand volleyball courts. Barbara said if non-residents are more in favor of adventure parks than residents, developing an adventure park might be a way to attract more visitors to the area. Jason noted that interest in fitness & wellness programs was high. Regarding Mile Long Field, Martha said there were 73 in favor of reconsidering the purchase and 63 opposed but, when non-resident responses were filtered out, there were 47 in favor and 52 opposed. Jason said 29% of the respondents checked “don’t know/no opinion,” which may indicate a need to educate the public about what Mile Long Field is and why it’s important. Jason said a lot of the comments from people who don’t use the fitness center were about it being too expensive. Mark said he is surprised that 55% of the respondents do use the fitness center. There was discussion about question #16 on economic potential. Martha said the way many people answered the question was problematic in terms of entering the data into survey monkey so she prepared a separate excel spreadsheet. Martha said “reopen the ski resort” had 394 points; “non-motorized trails” had 146; “4-season offerings at the Resort” had 145; “sporting events” had 121; and “concerts, fairs & festivals” had 115. “Golf course” only had 62 points and “motorized trails” had 38 points. The PC agreed that there is a clear mandate for the town to support the re-opening of the ski resort. Mark also noted the economic potential of certain town resources such as the mountain bike trails. Hal summarized the EC Fiber presentation at the Town Hall last Saturday. Mark questioned the value of fiber as an engine for economic development and home-based businesses. Jason said he thinks having high-speed internet may not be an attractor but not having it is a detractor.

5. Prepare for October 23<sup>rd</sup> SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats) analysis of economic development in West Windsor – Jason asked the PC what they hope to get from the SWOT analysis. Mark said there may be some value in the PC taking the lead on this. Barbara said the economic development chapter is not bad. Martha agreed but said she thinks the town needs a more detailed plan. There was discussion about the benefits of a general plan v. the benefits of a more specific plan. Hal read the paragraphs drafted by Elvin. Hal suggested looking at demographics (age, etc.), housing and tax rates and considering whether they are strengths or weaknesses. Martha said at the joint meeting on September 13<sup>th</sup>, there was discussion about the need for a vision for West Windsor and Glenn said the Selectboard is looking to the Planning Commission for that. The PC agreed to do an internal SWOT analysis and not actively seek community involvement at this time. Martha suggested that each PC member do their own SWOT brainstorming in advance of the next meeting. The PC agreed. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 PM. Jason invited those who cannot make it to the meeting to send their ideas to him.
6. Other Business – There was discussion about how to incorporate the recreation survey results in the town plan. Barbara asked Martha or Jason to incorporate Elvin’s paragraphs as well. Martha noted that the town plan doesn’t currently reflect the importance of the town roads as a recreational resource. Barbara agreed. Martha said anything in the town plan that is no longer accurate should be corrected. Jason described the public hearing process. There was discussion about what the local economy used to be based on (i.e. tourism) and the need to determine an economic basis for the future. Martha asked the PC about Courtney McKaig’s interest in having another community breakfast to present the recreation survey results. The PC agreed that they would like to wait until after their SWOT analysis to present anything to the community.
7. Minutes - September 27<sup>th</sup>: **Barbara moved to approve the minutes of September 27, 2012. Mark seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
8. Meeting schedule – The November meetings will be on November 14<sup>th</sup> and November 29<sup>th</sup>.
9. Adjourn – **Barbara moved to adjourn at 8:05 PM. Mark seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison