

## WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes  
March 1, 2010

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

1. Call to Order – Chair Hal Pyke called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.
2. Changes or Additions – None
3. West Windsor Town Plan: Review revised draft of Chapter 8 (Transportation) – The Planning Commission (PC) reviewed the changes to chapter 8 and made minor additional adjustments. There was discussion about when a road needs to meet the A-76 standard for town and development roads. Currently, in West Windsor's Zoning Regulations, if a road serves two or more houses, it has to meet the A-76 standard. Jason said most towns allow a driveway to serve one or two houses but once it serves three or more houses it becomes a road and has to meet road standards. Jason said, as an alternative to the A-76 standard, the town might want to consider variable standards for lane and shoulder widths based on the number of houses served. Jason presented the PC with a variable width chart from the Vermont State Standards. The PC agreed that variable width is a good idea. Hal said he thinks the chart should be included in the zoning regulations rather than the town plan. The PC agreed to recommend, in the Town Plan, that roads serving three or more houses meet stricter road standards. Glenn said he thinks it would be advisable to update the zoning bylaws immediately after completing the Town Plan. Hal agreed that the Town Plan and the Zoning Regulations have to match. Jason said it helps that, in this case, the PC is relaxing the standard. Elvin suggested signs for Route 44 where it doesn't have much of a shoulder, alerting drivers to bicyclists and pedestrians. Jason said the state will typically put up signs where there is a designated route. Glenn suggested signs for the Brownsville-Hartland Road as well. Jason said the town can do that. The PC talked about the sidewalks in the village. Hal said there was resistance to putting a sidewalk from the school to Route 44. The PC agreed that the Town Plan should specifically mention the need for a connection from Seems Road to the Post Office. Glenn said he thinks there should be improved signage or a crosswalk from the Resort parking lot to the lifts. The PC agreed. Hal said he supports the idea of improvements to the intersection of Route 44 and Ski Tow Road. Regarding increased winter traffic in the vicinity of ski resorts, Mark said he thinks Ascutney is an anomaly. Barbara asked where people work in West Windsor. Jason said, unfortunately, the 2000 Census data is the best we have. Barbara said it would be helpful to know the number of people who work in West Windsor, not just the percentage who commute here from various towns. Jason said he will get that information. Elvin asked if we could get an extension on the Town Plan until the new census data comes out. Jason said the state requires Town Plans to be revised every five years and detailed census data won't be available until 2013. Jason said the town could buy updated economic data for \$1,000 to \$2,000. Hal said he can't see the town spending that much for data. Martha said she will check with Mike to see if he still uses geotextiles. Barbara suggested more general language on continuing to use best practices for road engineering and maintenance. The PC agreed. Jason said the rule of thumb is that, if a road has more than 400 vehicle trips per day, the town should consider paving it. Therefore, if the town wants to keep some of its more heavily traveled roads unpaved, the highway department may have to use special construction and maintenance

techniques. Barbara suggested eliminating the paragraph on geotextiles. Martha said she could include what Jason just said. Barbara said one good thing about the dirt roads is that they don't end up with huge potholes that are expensive to repair. Barbara said dirt roads must be cheaper to maintain than paved roads. Jason said although the cost of gravel is going up, towns have all the equipment needed to maintain dirt roads themselves but when the road is paved they have to hire someone to repair it. There was some discussion about Coaching Lane Extension and the requirements that would have to be met for the town to take over the road. Barbara asked if the B-71 standards only apply where the driveway meets the road. Jason said that is true for most towns. Martha said West Windsor's regulations require the driveway to meet B-71 standards along its entire length for emergency access and public safety. The PC agreed that the B-71 standard should apply to driveways that serve one or two houses and the A-76 standard should apply to roads that serve three or more houses. Hal said his driveway, which is paved, has a swale between the driveway and the road so water running down the driveway doesn't wash out the road. The PC reviewed the transportation policies and recommendations and made a number of changes and deletions. Elvin asked if the PC wants to refer to "unidentified corridors." Martha said there was a public hearing on one "unidentified corridor" in December but her understanding is that the remaining five roads the Conservation Commission is looking at are not "unidentified corridors." Hal asked why the PC should review the 1999 Pedestrian Master Plan. Jason said it does mention the connection between Seems Road and the Post Office and it would be fairly easy to come up with new cost estimates. The PC agreed that the state would have to be involved in studying the feasibility of safety improvements to the intersection of Route 44 and Ski Tow Road.

Review Chapter 1 (Introduction) – The PC talked about eliminating the bulleted list of values in the Introduction. The PC agreed not to attach the 2004 survey to the 2010 Town Plan. Jason suggested revising the bulleted list to help define what "rural character" means to the residents of West Windsor. Hal said he thinks rural character is highly personal. Mark said he would prefer to get rid of the bullets and go with a broader statement. Barbara agreed that the individual chapters do an adequate job of conveying what rural character means in West Windsor. Jason suggested including the "Tools" section in Chapter 13 rather than Chapter 1. The PC agreed. The PC also agreed to eliminate the reference to the 2004 survey and to mention the series of forums instead. Barbara suggested mentioning the survey that the PC is planning to conduct at Town Meeting tomorrow. Jason said, according to state statute, the PC is responsible for getting as much input on the Town Plan as possible. Barbara said the introduction should mention the things that the PC has accomplished since the last Town Plan was adopted (e.g. subdivision regulations). Jason agreed that it would be good to mention the things that the PC has done to implement the recommendations of the previous Town Plan. The PC agreed. Mark said the paragraph about the Resort on page 5 should be updated. Jason suggested eliminating the sentence about Y2K. Mark said the property tax information and tax rate charts should be updated. Martha asked the PC if they want the four goals listed at the end of Chapter 1 to stay the same. The PC agreed that they don't want Light Industry throughout the town but, otherwise, the goals are still appropriate. Martha asked the PC if they want to allow reasonable, compatible growth only at the Resort, as the third goal implies, or throughout the town. Elvin said the Resort is a unique feature in the community and therefore deserves special mention. Jason asked the PC if they want to mention the village in Goal #3. Mark said the language of #3 also supports small-scale commercial industries in the locations where they presently exist, which includes the village. Hal said the draft future land use map defines Brownsville as a "town center." Hal said he'd

like to see the village mentioned in #3. Barbara said she thinks Chapter 1 should include a statement that the town plan has been created to protect the land for future generations, or something along those lines. Elvin suggested that #3 read as follows: “Promote the village of Brownsville with its Resort and small-scale commercial industries...” Martha noted that “promote” is more active and positive than “allow” and she doesn’t know if there is consensus in the town regarding growth at the Resort. Mark said the words “reasonable” and “compatible” balance the word “promote.” The PC agreed. Elvin asked if the agreed on wording is “Promote reasonable, compatible growth within the Village of Brownsville...” Hal said yes. Barbara suggested introducing the goals with the sentence, at the beginning of Chapter 1, that reads, “Our Town Plan is the expression of our community values and vision and our blueprint to promote and protect this vision and these values.” Everyone liked that idea. Review Chapter 12 (Relationship to Local & Regional Plans) – Jason said Chapter 12 is primarily a mapping exercise, comparing West Windsor’s future land use map with the future land use maps of surrounding towns. Jason said West Windsor’s map is reasonably compatible with the maps of Hartland, Weathersfield, and Reading, but Windsor’s future land use map shows forest, open space and agricultural along the Route 44 corridor and West Windsor’s map show primary growth in the adjoining area. Jason said Windsor’s zoning is not compatible with their town plan but that’s another issue. Jason said West Windsor may want to think about reducing the size of the secondary growth area. Martha said the secondary growth area is a little smaller in the zoning regulations. Jason also suggested that the PC consider creating an agricultural/open space category, including Mile Long Field and other areas that the town wants to protect. Martha asked if those areas are not already protected, being in the Conservation district. Jason said they are protected, and he thinks West Windsor is in compliance with state statute, but not as explicitly as some other towns. Hal suggested some minor changes to Chapter 12. Mark asked if the RPC has developed any plans that address the burgeoning energy issue. Jason said the RPC is just starting that process but the PC can look at the energy chapter of the Regional Plan.

4. Minutes - January 6, 2010: The Planning Commission recognized that, with Joe’s resignation, they will never be able to officially approve, by a majority of those present, the minutes of January 6, 2010. **Barbara made a motion to unofficially approve the minutes of January 6, 2010. Mark seconded the motion. February 17, 2010: Barbara made a motion to approve the minutes of February 17, 2010, as written. Glenn seconded the motion, which passed with Mark abstaining.**
5. Other Business – Barbara asked if a quorum is present, can a majority of the quorum approve an action. Hal said he will check Robert’s Rules. Jason asked if the PC’s Rules of Procedure address that issue. Hal said no.
6. Adjourn – **Barbara made a motion to adjourn at 12:20 PM. Glenn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison