

WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes

September 23, 2020

Present via zoom: Al Keiller, Laura Stillson, Leah Montalbano, Lauren Stevens, Mike Dudley, Fred Kolling, Peter Varkonyi, Deb Shearer

1. Call to Order—Chair Al Keiller called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM
2. Changes or Additions—Park and Recreation Committee
3. Announcements /Public Comment—Fred Kolling had read the draft of the Town Plan and had questions about how the Planning Commission was treating solar vs wind power in the Energy Chapter. Al said that that chapter was drafted with assistance from the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) following State guidelines for an Enhanced Energy Plan. Al did not think the Commission has a particular bias for solar over wind, but it could reflect a past sensitivity toward protecting ridgelines. Past Commissions have wrestled with a good definition of ridgelines to maintain the scenic character of the town without overly discouraging development. Al asked Fred if he had an issue with how it was written, or a preference. Fred said he was just trying to understand it because it seemed as if there was more wind potential in town than solar. Al suggested if he had an interest in renewables, a sustainability committee is being formed by the Selectboard and he could pass on his contact information to them. Fred said he is interested in the Sustainability Committee.
4. Affordable housing options for zoning regulations—The Committee discussed and identified minor changes to the zoning regulations that could impact the affordable housing. 1. Increase number of bedrooms and square footage in accessory dwellings. 2. Allow multifamily dwellings in all districts as Conditional Use. 3. Look at existing settlement patterns, to determine if a decrease minimum lot size in certain areas of Secondary Growth/Village zoning district would be of benefit (more research necessary) 2. Decrease minimum acreage for multifamily dwellings. Laura added that in looking at changing the zoning regulations it is really important to remember that view is an important part of “character of the neighborhood”. Lauren said she looked at the changes from the point of view of what larger infrastructures (barns) could easily be converted into multifamily units instead of new construction and saw that having strict minimum acreages could hinder such renovations. Leah believes in addition to affordability; it is important to identify what attracts young families to West Windsor and what will keep them here. What resources do we have? For her family, the proximity to trails and available outdoor recreation is important and potential Parks and Recreation department would be really well received.
5. Review Action Matrix of Town Plan—High Priority Recommendations of the Town Plan identify the Planning Commission is responsible for: 1. Revising Zoning regulations especially as it relates to village development, emergency access-driveway standards and subdivisions to have two points of access, and potential conflicts to adjacent land uses created by increased use and services to the Town Forest for recreation. And in cooperation with other organizations, 2. Revising Flood Hazard Bylaws and consider using the suggest state guidelines. 3. Coordinate with neighboring towns and partner organizations to advance recreational opportunities and related economic development. 4. Maintaining village center designation. Action Plan: [Deb will forward to the SB considerations for creating affordable](#)

draft

housing, and coordinate with Regional Planning Commission on assistance driveway regulations.

6. Driveway regulation update—Deb spoke Jason at the RPC and he said they could assist with creating specific language around regulating the slope of driveways to maintain addressing public safety and environmental concerns, while taking into consideration the nature of landscape in West Windsor. **Action item: Deb will email a list of driveways for the PC to consider as they drive around town and coordinate with the RPC on attending a future meeting.**
7. Other Business—Parks and Recreation Committee-To follow up from comments made during the public hearing on the updated Town Plan. Lauren explained that she along with Jess Brody who works in the recreation industry at the state level, thinks the creation of a Parks and Recreation Commission could help in bring in grant funding for programs to bring people and organizations like AO together to create events and programs that will attract and maintain young families as well as add vibrancy to the community. She noted the lack of childcare, after school and summer programs offered locally. **Action Item: Al suggested that Lauren and Jess present a proposal for the creation of a parks and rec committee or program to the PC at the next meeting if possible.**
8. Approve Minutes—**Mike moved to approve the minutes of August 19, 2020 as written. Al noted a typo in item #4. Leah seconded; the motion passed to approve the minutes with minor correction.**
9. Adjourn— The Planning Commission set the next meeting for Wednesday, October 28 at 6:30 PM and the meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Shearer