

## WEST WINDSOR PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

June 20, 2013

Present: Al Keiller, Barbara Truex, Arthur Steinberg, Elvin Kaplan, Mark Isenberg, Martha Harrison

1. Call to Order – Planning Commission Chair Barbara Truex called the meeting to order at 11:10 AM.
2. Changes or Additions – None
3. Public Comment – None
4. Initial Review: Town Plan Chapter 10 (Housing) – All agreed that the data in the housing chapter needs to be updated. Barbara noted the dramatic decrease in value of resort housing units in the recent reappraisal, the resulting influx of renters, and the impact on school enrollment. Al asked if the Town Plan should state that the closing of the ski area has created affordable housing. There was discussion about whether the situation is permanent or temporary and how it should be addressed. The Planning Commission (PC) agreed that the Town Plan should continue to recommend a ½ acre district at the east end of town. Al suggested noting the average decline in value and the fact that the decline has made housing more affordable. The PC agreed that the last sentence of the first paragraph is no longer applicable. Al suggested adding a short paragraph about the impact of the resort closing. The PC agreed. The PC also agreed to eliminate the paragraph about the shortage of affordable housing. Elvin suggested that the PC consider recommending that the Town pursue “aging in place” programs to support seniors who want to stay in their homes. Al suggested updating the information about current use. All agreed. Barbara commented that the “per acre” value of open land appears to have gone down significantly with the 2013 reappraisal, as did the value of resort property. The PC agreed to eliminate Housing Policy #2, 3 and 4, and Recommendation #2, 3 and 4. The PC also agreed to recommend that the zoning regulations be amended to allow ½-acre lots at the east end of the village.
5. Final Review: Town Plan Chapter 9 (Energy) – Martha will try to confirm the information about the percentage of energy expenditures that stay in the community. The PC agreed that they don’t want commercial wind facilities in West Windsor, and agreed to recommend that the zoning regulations be amended to restrict public facilities in the Conservation District. Al noted that the town’s scenic nature is one of its primary assets and therefore commercial wind would not be appropriate. The PC agreed that individual wind turbines are exempt from height restrictions but must meet all other regulations, especially with regard to setbacks, noise and lighting. The PC agreed to remove the reference to designated scenic areas since there aren’t any in West Windsor. The PC wondered whether hydroelectric systems would be feasible in West Windsor. Martha agreed to research the issue. Barbara suggested some language on commercial solar power. The PC agreed that commercial systems should not be visually obtrusive. Elvin asked about the difference between “private” and “commercial” solar systems. Martha will look for definitions. Regarding outdoor wood furnaces, the PC agreed that they are not appropriate for neighborhoods with small lots. Barbara said there should also be efficiency standards for indoor wood furnaces. Martha will see if the state allows towns to restrict indoor wood furnaces. The PC agreed to remove information about carpooling since it is duplicated in the Transportation chapter. The PC reviewed the Energy policies and recommendations and made changes where appropriate.
6. Minutes – May 29<sup>th</sup>: **Al moved the approval of the minutes of May 29<sup>th</sup>. Arthur seconded the motion, which passed with Mark abstaining.**
7. Other Business – Next meeting: At their next meeting on Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 AM, the PC will do a final review of Chapter 9 (Energy) or Chapter 10 (Housing).
8. Adjourn – **Barbara moved to adjourn at 1:00 PM. Mark seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison