

From: Lois Laczko February 16, 2012 2:55:17 PM
Subject: Planning Commission Minutes 01/24/2012 ADOPTED
To: SimsburyCT_PlanMin
Cc:

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
JANUARY 24, 2012
REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Michael R. Paine, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Ferg Jansen, Richard Cortes, William Rice, Robert Kulakowski, Gary Lungarini, and Mark Drake. Also in attendance were Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, Janis Prifti, Commission Clerk, and other interested parties.

II. SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Paine appointed Commissioner Lungarini to serve for Commissioner Hallenbeck.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of January 10, 2012

Commissioner Rice made a motion to approve the January 10, 2012, minutes. Commissioner Drake seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

IV. DISCUSSION WITH TOWN ATTORNEY: PRESENTATION OF PLANNING LAW

Chairman Paine stated the Town Attorney has committed to appear at the 6 p.m. February 14, 2012, Planning Commission meeting. He said the Commission needs the Town Attorney's feedback on both Subdivision Regulations and bonding. He said bonding will be driven by state law and how residential and non-residential/commercial is defined. Mr. Peck will arrange a meeting room and thanked the Chairman for gaining the Town Attorney's commitment to a meeting date. Mr. Peck stated the Town Attorney provided a presentation on January 23rd to the Zoning Commission, much of which is applicable to other Commissions; he provided the Commissioners a

copy of the presentation for review. He said some important parts include: things you can/cannot say, how public hearings are conducted, and what the Commission's authority is.

V. DISCUSSION

a. Subdivision Regulations

Mr. Peck sent the Town Attorney drafts of the Subdivision Regulations and anticipates receiving his comments in advance of the February 14th meeting in order to incorporate them. He said there are some small subdivision applications that may be coming forward. Chairman Paine will reconfirm with the Town Attorney the need to receive his comments the week before the February 14th meeting.

b. Budget Discussion

Chairman Paine said, regarding the February 28th meeting, the Board of Selectmen has requested use of the Main Meeting Room for a Budget Workshop. He said the Planning Commission Meeting will be held at Eno Hall.

Chairman Paine stated that when the Board of Selectmen discuss the Planning Commission Budget, it is important for Commissioners to be present and support the budget; information on the budget meeting date and time will be on the website. He also noted Mr. Peck's ongoing credential requirements that he must maintain. Mr. Peck said it is important to attend the national conference in order to remain certified; he has attended every other year, rather than every year, due to the budget constraints. He plans to attend the national conference this year.

c. CRCOG Representative Status

Chairman Paine would like to increase the Commission's involvement with CRCOG. CRCOG meets every other month on the 3rd Thursday and the next meeting will be March 15th. Mr. Peck stated that in the past, volunteers were asked to represent the Town. Commissioner Drake said he attended for a 3-4 month period, rotating with Commissioner Hallenbeck, who attended for another 3-month period, and then the schedule changed to every other month with frequent cancellations; their goal was to maintain continuity with one person attending a series of meetings. Commissioner Jansen said they tried to get complete CRCOG minutes for the full Commission by email; Chairman

Paine stated it is now done electronically and the minutes go back to 2008. Chairman Paine suggested a couple of Commissioners attend each meeting for continuity. Commissioner Drake said in the past, alternate members attended in order to become more versed in the ways of Planning Commissions. Commissioner Paine said the next two CRCOG meetings are scheduled for March 15th and May 17th and will be on the Commission's next meeting agenda for further discussion and planning.

VI. STAFF REPORT(s)

Mr. Peck stated the owner of property two blocks south of the new Dunkin' Donuts presented a proposed site plan to the Design Review Board; the Board had a number of issues with the application and did not recommend approval.

Mr. Peck said Westminster student and faculty housing is planning to demolish a significant number of buildings and to create new buildings for student housing and faculty apartments. He said the Design Review Board thought highly of Westminster's application and recommended approval.

Mr. Peck said that, regarding Design Guidelines, Nori Winter's office will provide a specific timeframe by the end of this week. He said there will probably be a web conference with Mr. Winter in Colorado to review and discuss the draft before they return to Town; as soon as dates are confirmed he will inform the Commission.

Commissioner Rice asked about the former pool barn property. Mr. Peck said there is no application; the property owner came to the Zoning Commission to find out if there was a zoning question to be resolved. Mr. Peck said in the past, a number of variances were approved, including a used car lot and retail sales. He said the owner has not started any design criteria or site plans; as soon as there is an application, the process will begin. He said if a zone change is requested it will go through the zone change process and this Commission. He said if no zone change is requested, there may or may not be a public hearing, depending on exactly what is proposed, e.g. gas pumps. He said there is no subdivision; it is one piece of land on about 1.6 acres next to the bike trail. He said they discussed the possibility of creating a series of small retail shops in a rehabilitated former pool barn and possibly creating an architecturally similar additional building on the property. He said the ZBA has authority to break the zoning regulations and hold public hearings; no one appealed the existing variances and they remain with the land. He added all these

issues will be worked through and as soon as an application is received the Commission will be informed.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Chairman Paine stated he, Commissioner Hallenbeck, and Mr. Peck typically set the Planning Commission Agenda a week before each meeting and invited the Commissioners' input. He stated the election process for the Commission is straightforward if change is desired.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jansen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Commissioner Drake seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Tina Hallenbeck, Secretary