

From: Lois Laczko December 16, 2011 10:12:53 AM
Subject: Planning Commission Minutes 11/22/2011 ADOPTED
To: SimsburyCT_PlanMin
Cc:

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
NOVEMBER 22, 2011
REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Michael R. Paine, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Ferg Jansen, Charles Houlihan, William Rice, Tina Hallenbeck, Sean Askham, Robert Kulakowski and Mark Drake. Also in attendance was Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, Janis Prifti, Commission Clerk, and other interested parties.

II. SEATING OF ALTERNATES

A quorum was present; no alternates were seated.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of October 25, 2011

The October 25, 2011 minutes were amended on Line 92, to change "special interest housing" to "special needs housing"; and on Line 249, "Commissioner Rice" was changed to "Commissioner Askham". Commissioner Hallenbeck made a motion to approve the October 25, 2011, minutes as amended. Commissioner Askham seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION'S 2012 REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE

The schedule was amended to change "*December 25, 2011" to "*December 25, 2012". Commissioner Houlihan made a motion to approve the 2012 Regular Meeting Schedule, as amended. Commissioner Askham seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

V. DISCUSSION ON SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Mr. Peck stated that he would send significant additional information to the Commissioners before the next meeting. He said the Plan of

Conservation Development is reviewed at least every 10 years and they will begin setting up funding for the next review in this budget process - that is the only statutory deadline.

VI. DISCUSSION

a. Update on Low Impact Development Guidelines

Mr. Peck will provide a copy of the Stormwater Design Guidelines to those who want it. He said the Guidelines are developing into more of a reference manual and while it was designed for Town Center and in some cases the techniques are applicable to other areas of Town, they are not applicable to all areas. He asked the Commissioners to review the document and provide feedback. Regarding the life cycle of Stormwater Design Guidelines, Mr. Peck said they change constantly and are influenced by various projects around the country as well as federal policy, like the Clean Water Act. He said these Guidelines are state of the art and put solutions in context. He said flexibility has been built into these regulations in order to do the right thing for each site, including issues such as type of soil, topography, or whether the site is over-developed and impervious. He discussed the idea of having developers contribute funding to a stormwater bank where a series of properties could create funding for an offsite stormwater treatment area. He said there are 6-8 sites where stormwater can be treated before it gets to the floodplain and river, including Iron Horse, the Performing Arts Center, Simscroft property, and the Sewage Treatment Plant. He said the LID Guidelines provide a very flexible tool accommodating both Center development and treatment of stormwater. He stated DEEP felt this work is outstanding and finalized the grant.

Mr. Peck said the graphics by Providence architect, Russell Preston, are fantastic and they are investigating working with him further. He said they did 3 test model sites - Simscroft, the courtyard area from Hopmeadow to Iron Horse, and the post office. There are actual build-out scenarios in the document for each site showing actual structures based on the form-based code and the LID stormwater control method; the next phase is for actual building design. He said unfortunately, the document is too large to post on the Town website but is available in-house. He said compared to other Town studies this is the best so far. Commissioner Houlihan complimented Mr. Peck on doing a nice job on this project.

b. Update on Town Center Guidelines

Mr. Peck said the consultants from Denver will be here December 6th; the meeting will be at Masonic Hall beginning at 9 a.m. and will go all day with four focus groups - property owners 9-10 a.m., community groups 10-11

a.m., business owners 1-2 p.m., and designers and developers 3-4 p.m. He said the focus is on those with a particular interest in Town Center; each focus group will be seated around a table and each meeting will last an hour; there are 5-6 questions for each group to think about in advance of the meetings; the public is invited to attend with possibly time for questions.

At 5:30 p.m., the Design Review Board will meet with the consultants; from 7-9 p.m., the consultants will hold a public workshop to discuss what they heard all day and the course for the study. On December 7th, staff will meet with the consultants for debriefing and to provide feedback on the study's direction. He said this is a 9-month project slated for completion by June 30, 2012. He said the 3 consultants returning were involved in the Charrette and are very interested in the historic aspects of the Town and will be straightforward with their opinions about which buildings to preserve; what is finally decided is up to the Town. He said this will provide the Town, at moderate cost, a final text with different electronic architectural models for the 3 sites; provide landowners a lot of information; and make the design process more transparent. He invited the Commissioners attendance and participation on December 6th and will post the schedule early next week on the Town website. He complimented the Masonic Hall people who have been very, very helpful and have a beautiful facility where these meetings will be held all day and evening.

V. STAFF REPORT(s)

Mr. Peck announced the Town won a statewide award from the American Planning Association for the Town Center Code and a plaque will be received in December.

He anticipates a couple of small subdivision applications will come in prior to the next Commission meeting.

Regarding Dorset Crossing's groundbreaking, he said it is re-scheduled for November 30th at 11 a.m. and all Commissioners are invited to attend.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Chairman Paine thanked and extended good wishes to departing Commissioners Houlihan, Askham and Needham for their valuable service to the Town.

Commissioner Jansen reconfirmed that the Commission passed "fee in lieu"; Mr. Peck will recheck the Rte. 10 Corridor Study to assure it is included.

Mr. Peck stated it was a pleasure working with all the Commissioners and invited the departing Commissioners to continue to call him with any

questions.

Mr. Peck stated they are beginning to consider putting solar panels on the landfill and also setting up regional recharging stations for hydrogen vehicles; grants would be needed to begin the process; these ideas could be incorporated in the next planning process.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jansen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.
Commissioner Askham seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Tina Hallenbeck, Secretary