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To: SimsburyCT_PlanMin
Cc:

ADOPTED

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
November 24, 2009
REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman John Loomis called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:10 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Gerry Post, Mark Drake, Carl Eisenmann, Ferg Jansen and Carol Cole. Chip Houlihan arrived at 7:35 p.m. Also in attendance were Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, as well as other interested parties.

II. SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Loomis appointed Commissioner Cole to serve in the absence of Commissioner Houlihan, Commissioner Eisenmann to serve in the absence of Commissioner Meyer and Commissioner Drake to serve in the absence of Commissioner Bednarczyk.

Chairman Loomis thanked Commissioners Bednarczyk, Eisenmann and Meyer for their service. He commended Commissioner Bednarczyk for her 19 years of service. She paid attention to the needs of the Town and to the residents. She contributed to the 1994 Plan of Development and the 2007 Plan of Conservation and Development. She also supported consistently, open space and farmland issues.

Chairman Loomis commended Commissioner Meyer for her preparation, presentation and perseverance. He stated that Commissioner Eisenmann stepped forward to fill an alternate position. He was thanked for bringing his legal expertise to the Commission.

Mr. Peck stated that he has received a preliminary response from the Town Attorney regarding Commissioner Meyer's question regarding open space and conservation easements.

III. POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF MINUTES from the November 10, 2009 meeting

Several edits were made to the minutes.

Commissioner Post made a motion to approve the November 10, 2009 minutes as amended. Commissioner Eisenmann seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

IV. THE TOWN CENTER CHARRETTE NEXT STEPS

Mr. Peck stated that there was a follow-up meeting to the Charrette, which was held on November 17th at the Simsbury Public Library. He stated that the consultant presented the Charrette report and the follow-up activities with regard to finishing the Town Center code. He also made suggestions regarding the procedure and timing of the draft code.

Mr. Peck stated that the code will be a street based code with two main parts, which will identify various streets by function type and standards regarding types of buildings located on the streets. Regarding timing, the consultant should be back with the draft in late December or January.

Mr. Peck stated that the responses were good regarding the follow-up meeting. He is anxious to see what happens when the Town receives the code. He stated that it will be different from the current regulations. He stated that there are codes in place in different parts of the country that have been modified since they were put in place. He stated that although those codes were not bad, acceptable modifications were made. Mr. Peck stated that modifications may be made to Simsbury's code, although they will have to go through a certain process. He stated that he is hopeful that the new code will be in place by the spring, after the public hearing and adoption of the regulation.

Chairman Loomis stated that he was disappointed that SCTV was not available to televise this meeting. Mr. Peck stated that the PowerPoint presentation and audio of the meeting are available.

Chairman Loomis stated that he was encouraged how people and different interest groups have come together throughout this whole process.

Commissioner Eisenmann left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

V. STATUS OF THE INCENTIVE HOUSING ZONE STUDY

Mr. Peck stated that Concord Square has finished their report. He stated that the study included 6-7 sites in Simsbury. The Zoning Commission will look at the regulation to see if any modifications need to be made. He stated that the Design Review Board will also be working on the design

guidelines for the IHZ guidelines.

Commissioner Houlihan arrived at 7:35 p.m. Chairman Loomis appointed Commissioner Cole to now serve in the absence of Commissioner Eisenmann.

Mr. Peck stated that, because of limited funds, Concord Square participated in the Charrette at no cost to the Town. The agreement was that if the consultant participated in the Charrette, the Design Review Board and others would have direct input in the design guidelines within the Incentive Housing Zone regulation. He stated that the Design Review Board will continue working on this at their December 8th meeting. He stated that he is hopeful that the regulation will be in place, including the design guidelines, by the end of December. Mr. Peck stated that the design guidelines are not solely the purview of the Design Review Board; he welcomes comments and input from others.

Commissioner Houlihan stated that the Zoning Commission has to incorporate the design guidelines into the definition of the Incentive Housing Zone. They will have the final say if the design is appropriate or not. Mr. Peck stated that this is correct, although OPM has the final say

VI. STATUS OF THE PROPOSED PLANNED AREA DEVELOPMENT (PAD) ZONE

Mr. Peck stated that the Chamber of Commerce has sent out a letter regarding wanting the PAD to move forward. He stated that this issue will be an agenda item for the next Zoning Commission meeting. He stated that the new members of the Zoning Commission will be sitting for the first time at that meeting; he is unsure how they will handle this issue.

VII. STAFF REPORT(s)

Chairman Loomis stated that Mr. Sawitzke will address capital projects at their next meeting. Mr. Peck stated that there is not much funding for capital projects.

Chairman Loomis stated that the Commission needs to review their Subdivision Regulations at the next meeting as well. Mr. Peck stated that the Regulation is out of date. There are a number of things that need to be updated in order to be in line with the State Statutes, and in regard to technology and different aspects of Subdivision law and techniques.

Chairman Loomis stated that the Commission should also review the distinctions regarding open space and conservation easements. Mr. Peck stated that the Commission should look at what the functions of open space are and with regard to conservation easements. He stated that they should also consider when it is appropriate to use one over the other. He stated

that open space and conservation easements could function together. He recommended that discussions take place as well as possibly a joint meeting with the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Peck stated that he would also like to discuss fee in lieu of open space and transfer of development rights with the Commission at a future meeting.

Mr. Peck distributed a letter from Don Rieger of the Conservation Commission regarding his view on open space and how it should be used and how it functions.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

There were none.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jansen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. Commissioner Houlihan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Gerry Post, Secretary