

From: Carolyn Keily February 21, 2012 10:44:44 AM  
Subject: Charter Revision Commission Minutes 02/14/2012  
To: SimsburyCT\_CharRevComm  
Cc:

CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 14, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robert Heagney called the regular meeting of the Charter Revision Commission to order at 5:38 P. M. in the North Conference Room of Eno Memorial Hall, 754 Hopmeadow Street. The following members were also present: Darren Cunningham, James Fleming, Brad Mead, and Peter Pabich. Also present were Attorney Robert DeCrescenzo; Lisa Gray, Commission Clerk; and other interested parties.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Cunningham to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2012 meeting, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mead, and passed unanimously.

V. INVITED GUESTS

Attorney DeCrescenzo stated that Mary Glassman expressed her regrets at not being able to appear before the commission this evening, but he distributed a memo from her detailing her views on the Personnel Director function in the Charter. He also re-distributed a memo from Thomas Cooke, Director of Administrative Services, dated May 6, 2011, in which Mr. Cooke outlined provisions in the Charter identified by Town staff for possible review by the Commission.

VI. CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE CHARTER CHANGES

Commissioner Mead expressed his opinions in favor of combining the Planning and Zoning Commissions. He felt that streamlining the application process and reducing bureaucracy would be beneficial.

Chairman Heagney commented that Planning and Zoning are two very different commissions with different goals and responsibilities and he believed it is beneficial to keep them separate.

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Commissioner Mead agreed that there is value in having both commissions, particularly as they pertain to the Plan of Development.

#### VII. PUBLIC AUDIENCE

A motion was made by Commissioner Fleming to reopen the public audience. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cunningham, and unanimously carried.

Attorney T. J. Donohue appeared before the commission to comment on the Design Review Board. As someone who has appeared before the Design Review Board on numerous occasions representing various clients, he praised the board for their service and decisions that have made the Town of Simsbury a more attractive place to live. He commented, though, that the Design Review Board is perceived negatively by those appearing before it. Many of the board's procedures and actions cause it to appear as though the board is opposed to development instead of being interested in helping a developer make a project better. As an example, he described the Board's current procedure of having all of its members up on a raised platform in front of an audience as "draconian" and was in favor of a more informal meeting around a table with all the members, the applicants and their representation.

Commissioner Cunningham asked Attorney Donohue for his opinion about restricting the types of people, based on their profession, who can serve on the Design Review Board. Attorney Donohue replied that he feels there should be no limitations on the people who can serve on the board.

Commissioner Pabich expressed his opinion that the Design Review Board is too large at 10 members and suggested a six-member board would be more

efficient and less intimidating to applicants.

VIII. TOWN COUNSEL'S REPORT

Attorney DeCrescenzo distributed a draft of the revised Charter and a memo explaining the changes that he has implemented.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Pabich to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 PM.

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Brad Mead, Secretary