

From: Lois Laczko September 29, 2009 11:31:54 AM
Subject: Planning Commission Minutes 09/08/2009 ADOPTED
To: SimsburyCT_PlanMin
Cc:

ADOPTED

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
September 8, 2009
REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman John Loomis called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:03 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Susan Bednarczyk, Gerry Post, Mark Drake, Julie Meyer, Charles Houlihan, Ferg Jansen and Carl Eisenmann. Carol Cole arrived at 8:00 p.m. Also in attendance were Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, as well as other interested parties.

II. SEATING OF ALTERNATES

None were needed.

III. POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF MINUTES from the July 14, 2009 and July 28, 2009 regular meetings

Several edits were made to the July 14, 2009 minutes.

Commissioner Post made a motion to approve the July 14, 2009 minutes as amended. Commissioner Meyer seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Several edits were made to the July 28, 2009 minutes.

Commissioner Bednarczyk made a motion to approve the July 28, 2009 minutes as amended. Chairman Loomis seconded the motion, which was approved. Commissioners Jansen, Houlihan and Meyer abstained.

Chairman Loomis stated that the Board of Selectmen heard the proposal on the Meadowood extension. They relied on the Planning Commission's recommendation and voted to grant that extension. Mr. Peck stated that the Board of Selectmen was clear that no further extensions would be granted.

IV. STATUS OF THE TOWN CENTER CHARRETTE

Mr. Peck stated that there will be a meeting held on Saturday, September 11th at the Simsbury Public Library in the Program Room. That room will hold approximately 150-170 people. If more people attend, they will be directed to another area of the library to watch the presentation on screens. He stated that the break-out sessions will be in four different rooms with a total of 15 different tables. There will be facilitators at each table, made up of consultants and Town staff. There will be base maps at all of the tables.

Mr. Peck stated that volunteers at the meeting will sign people in and also count people. There will be parking at Boy Scout Hall and at the Church for the Saturday meeting. He stated that they have made all of the accommodations necessary for a large crowd.

Mr. Peck stated that the Saturday morning meeting will be an explanation of how the Charrette process will work and an introduction of the team members. There will be three public sessions; one on Saturday morning, one on Monday night and the last one on Wednesday night. There will be other sessions for the consultant to speak with different groups, such as CRCOG and other groups with specific interests.

Commissioner Houlihan questioned if the DOT would be at these meetings. Mr. Peck stated that he is unsure. He has been trying to get a hold of someone at the DOT, although they are not connecting with each other. Commissioner Post stated that it will be key to have the DOT at these meetings. Mr. Peck agreed. He stated that there are many aspects that the DOT should be involved in.

Commissioner Post stated that the Town did a great job advertising for the Charrette. He questioned how many people, on average, turn out for a Charrette. Mr. Peck stated that the numbers for a Charrette turnout varies. He stated that 200 people would be a lot. He stated that if the weather is bad, people may not come out. He has received several e-mails already from people who cannot attend. He has forwarded these comments to the consultant.

Commissioner Houlihan questioned if SCTV would be televising the Charrette meetings while the consultants are still in Town. Mr. Peck stated that, hopefully, they will be getting the tape within 1-2 hours onto the Town's website.

Chairman Loomis questioned how latecomers to Saturday morning's meeting would be handled. Mr. Peck stated that people need to be on time. The

initial discussion will be on the process. The doors will open between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. The room will be set up Friday night. Mr. Peck stated that Code Studio will be getting into Town on Friday. Code Studio is the primary consultant. The team will also consist of people with different expertise from different parts of the country. There are a total of six firms that make up the team. He stated that there will also be other knowledgeable people, although not in an official capacity, attending the Charrette. Mr. Peck stated that Concord Square will also be in Town during the Charrette regarding the Incentive Housing Zone. They will not be charging the Town for this.

Chairman Loomis questioned if Mr. Peck had received any feedback from the other four sessions. He thought all of the meetings were good to excellent. Mr. Peck stated that people who attended these meetings found them to be helpful. The consultant has stated that good things have already been done in Simsbury; they want to build on what has already been done. Mr. Peck stated that he has received good feedback from all of the sessions.

Commissioner Jansen questioned how long it would take from the time the consultants left before the Town received the Code and gets approval. Mr. Peck stated that the consultants will come back to Simsbury in December or January with recommendations for the final code. The Zoning Commission will need to go through the process; this will be referred to the Planning Commission prior to the public hearing. Mr. Peck stated that he is hopeful that the consultant will give Simsbury a code that is close to what the Town and residents want.

In response to a question from Commissioner Jansen, Mr. Peck stated that this code will be for a very defined area; it does not affect any residential properties or any properties outside of the Town Center.

Commissioner Meyer stated that Mr. Peck stated that the application of the resulting code would be almost administrative. She stated that she thought this would be all administrative. She asked Mr. Peck to define almost. Mr. Peck stated that the Town still has to deal with State Statutes and what they require from the Town.

Mr. Peck stated that Code Studio is not going into this process with any preconceived notions. They want input from residents. They will design a code around this input.

Chairman Loomis stated that he feels the four other sessions were helpful. Mr. Peck stated that prior to those meetings, people were apprehensive about the Charrette process. He stated that people have to trust in the process and believe that the Town will get a good result from the

Charrette.

V. STATUS OF THE INCENTIVE HOUSING ZONE STUDY

Mr. Peck stated that there is some tricky wording in the original legislation, which talks about the housing densities. He will be suggesting to the Zoning Commission that they consider this prior to adopting the Regulation for the Charrette. At this point, Mr. Peck stated that the consultant is scheduled to finish their work before the end of the year. They should be back to the Town with their recommendations prior to the end of the year.

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

Mr. Peck stated that the Zoning Commission received a copy of the PAD document at their meeting. They wanted time to review the document. Their next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on September 21st.

VII. STAFF REPORT(s)

Commissioner Meyer stated that, at the last meeting, she asked for some clarification from the Town Attorney regarding the interpretation of 3.9c of the Simsbury Subdivision Regulations, whether or not the dry to wet and steep slope ratios apply only to open space or to open space and conservation easements. Mr. Peck stated that he will ask the Town Attorney again for this information.

Commissioner Meyer stated that, it is her impression that it does not matter whether an applicant proposes open space or a conservation easement; the ratio should be calculated. This does not necessarily need to be upheld; the Commission can waive it, but they should know whether or not the applicant is in conformance. Commissioner Houlihan stated that there should be consistency regarding the use of a conservation easement in lieu of open space.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

There were none.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jansen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Commissioner Meyer seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Gerry Post, Secretary