



ESSEX PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, April 13, 2017

7:30 p.m.

Essex Town Hall – Meeting Room A

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Seating of Members

Chairman Alan Kerr called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Members George Sexton and Thomas Danyliw. Alternate Erin Bogan was seated for Member John Bairos and Alternate Jane Siris was seated for Member Ralph Monaco.

2. Approval of Minutes: March 9, 2017 Regular Meeting

Motion to approve minutes of March 9, 2017 by Alan Kerr, seconded by George Sexton.
Motion carried unanimously.

3. New Business

a. None

Application 17-5 (Zoning Amendment Referral) has been withdrawn at this time.

4. Old Business

a. Housing Needs Survey Discussion

Chairman Kerr spoke regarding the survey results from the Essex public on opinions concerning housing opportunity. Over 200 responses was obtained and the majority agreed that it is important to have a diversity in housing. About a third of the responses showed that they thought this housing would cause a negative impact in the town.

Mr. Danyliw feels that this survey may be skewed when only comparing results from a population of this size. He thinks that it does give some direction, but no final conclusions should be based off of this. Chairman Kerr still feels that no matter what the survey results are, the distribution of the survey is useful as a method of spreading awareness in the town about the housing issue. He

feels that it's off to a good start and thinks it should be kept open for a while in order to hopefully get more responses from the residents. Mr. Sexton mentioned the library putting something in their newsletter or having a flyer on the counter to make people aware of the survey.

b. Zoning Revision Subcommittee - Update

Chairman Kerr stated that Mr. Guskowski said there is really no new news on this as he has not attended a zoning meeting within the last month. Chairman Kerr mentioned that Zoning Enforcement Officer Joe Budrow continues to believe that there will be a public hearing in May or June to review what is to be done. Mr. Guskowski feels that the re-write of the regulations is not really a re-structure but rather just changing punctuation, etc. He does not feel that it's been useful. Mr. Danyliw went on record to express some concern in the way that the Zoning Commission is moving forward with this project, and that it may be inconsistent with the plans of conservation and development in terms of the Planning Commission's involvement and the consistency of their efforts.

Chairman Kerr feels it would be useful to get Mr. Guskowski's input at the next meeting. The Commission agreed to discuss the topic at the next meeting and to consider what steps might be taken to promote the creation of a Zoning Regulations revision document which supports the vision of the PoCD.

5. Report of Committees and Officers

a. Report from Inland Wetlands Representative

The Planning Commission has no active representative to the Wetlands Agency.

b. Report from RiverCOG Representative

Alan Kerr reported that the River COG meeting was cancelled for March.

c. Report from Economic Development Commission Representative

George Sexton reported from the EDC on a number of business developments. The Christmas Barn got approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals to convert the second floor to a room and keep retail on the first floor. The Essex Restaurant and Scotch Plains Tavern are scheduled to open around June, and Cannoli on the Run is scheduled to open at the end of April. The old Benny's Market property is currently under contract, and Cumberland Farms is pending a demolition of their building in May. Their application was approved from the Essex Health Department but is still waiting on approval from the DOT. Essex Boat Works is meeting with inland wetlands on May 10th and will be at the Zoning Commission's public hearing on May 15th. Computer Management Systems is looking to move their business from Westbrook to 55 Plains Road in Essex, and lastly, a rehabilitation center from Essex will soon be moving into the old Shoreline Clinic location.

d. Planner's Report

None

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6. Correspondence & Invoices

None

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Alan Kerr, seconded by George Sexton. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon DeLorso
Substitute Clerk for Planning Commission

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