



## ESSEX PLANNING COMMISSION

### SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, November 4, 2013

7:30 p.m.

Essex Town Hall – Room A

### DRAFT MINUTES

#### 1) Call to Order and Seating of Members

Chairman Tom Danyliw called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. In attendance for the meeting was members Linda Herman and Alan Kerr. Seated for Carla Feroni was Bob Laundry and seated for Ralph Monaco was Claire Tiernan. Also in attendance was First Selectman Norman Needleman. Participating via teleconference was Town Planner John Guskowski.

#### 2) New Business

##### a. CGS §8-24 Referral from Board of Selectmen Regarding Proposed Acquisition of a Portion of 27 West Avenue by the Board of Selectmen

First Selectman Needleman indicated that he was requesting a letter of opinion from the Planning Commission on the acquisition of the Perry Property. Mrs. Perry had passed away earlier in the year, and her heirs entered discussions with the Town about the potential acquisition of a portion, which would expand the Town's property as well as connect the Town Hall property with another potential future municipal facility at Highland Hall. There was no particular plan for expansion of Town facilities, but this is an opportunity to acquire future expansion property.

The Perry property executor conducted an appraisal on the property and the rear portion of the property. The easement value, which First Selectman Needleman would not be interested in, was \$200,000. The Perry family would be willing to sell approximately 2/3 acre of the rear portion of the land for that \$200,000. First Selectman Needleman stated that there were no specific plans, and the first question was "does the Town even want this property?" He discussed the current needs for facilities and space at Town Hall, which include needing better facilities for the Police and for Social Services. Ultimately, expansion will be needed. Internal expansion is possible to some extent, but additional space need is likely within 5-10 years.

Chairman Danyliw asked about the cost of \$200,000, and how the Town is really the only potential party interested in this portion of the property. The Commission reviewed a map of the land and discussed its access from Town Hall and to Highland Hall. First Selectman Needleman stated that a small municipal building of approximately 2500 square feet would fit very nicely on this land. Alan Kerr asked for clarification on the proposed cross-easements, to which First Selectman Needleman replied that it would be a shared buffer area to protect each side from the abutting land use and activity.

Linda Herman noted that the 2005 Plan of Conservation and Development indicated that capital improvements and potential expansion of Town Hall facilities should be carefully considered, but were important to continued improvement of Town services. First Selectman Needleman noted that virtually all of the improvements indicated in the 2004 AKV study commissioned by former Selectman Phil Miller had been completed, and any additional improvements would need new space. Chairman Danyliw noted that CGS Section 8-24 required some statement of approval or disapproval.

**Motion to endorse the Board of Selectman's proposed acquisition of a portion of 27 West Avenue for reason of its consistency with the Town of Essex Plan of Conservation and Development by Bob Laundry, seconded by Claire Tiernan.**

Alan Kerr asked where the funding for the acquisition would come from, and First Selectman Needleman stated that this would be up to the Board of Finance, if approved at Town Meeting. The Board of Finance could roll this into the upcoming capital improvement bond, or it could come out of undesignated funds. It would be unlikely to be included as a portion of the next year's budget. Alan Kerry asked about the manner of evaluating the asking price. Linda Herman noted that the Town had been assessing the land value of this property at \$471,000. Chairman Danyliw and First Selectman Needleman agreed that while the price may be slightly high and it may be possible to negotiate a very slightly reduced cost, the long-term value of the land to the Town was significant enough to not quibble overly about that difference. Claire Tiernan stated that the value of this land to the Town was high.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **3) Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:53 p.m. by Claire Tiernan, seconded by Alan Kerr.  
Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Guskowski  
Town Planner (Consulting)

**RECEIVED FOR RECORD**

11-05-2013 at 10:15Am  
Frances Solin  
ESSEX CT Town Clerk