



## ESSEX PLANNING COMMISSION

**Regular Meeting  
May 9, 2013  
Essex Town Hall – Room A**

### MINUTES

#### **1. Call to Order and Seating of Members:**

Chairman Tom Danyliw called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. In attendance were Commissioners Linda Herman and Ralph Monaco. Seated for Alan Kerr was Alternate Bob Laundy. Also in attendance were WPCA Chair Susan Malan and Planner John Guskowski.

#### **2. Approval of Minutes:** April 18, 2013

**Motion to approve minutes of April 18, 2013** by Bob Laundy, **seconded** by Linda Herman.  
**Motion carried unanimously, with Ralph Monaco abstaining**

#### **3. New Business**

##### **a. Subdivision Application – Laurel Road/Grandview Terrace**

John Guskowski noted that following the request by the property owners' representative to place this application on the agenda, no formal application has been received.

##### **b. Transportation Plan – Discussion with First Selectman**

Chairman Danyliw noted that First Selectman Needleman was unable to attend that evening's meeting, and with his apologies, promised to attend the meeting in June.

#### **4. Old Business**

##### **a. Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan**

John Guskowski stated that Carla Feroni and he had been working with Jeremy on a revision to the first draft, and would be meeting later in May to finish the review of the first draft. He anticipated a revision for the June meeting.

##### **b. PoCD Updates – Overview of Goals**

The Commission reviewed the proposed first draft of the Statement of Intent for the 2015 Plan of Conservation & Development. There was general agreement that the approach of the Statement and the scope of the Major Goals & Objectives reflected the vision of the Commission. Chairman Danyliw recommended that the statement in the second paragraph about growth and development be written in a positive voice rather than the negative.

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There was general discussion about the statements about development being focused in the three village areas and commercial hubs, and where outlying areas fit in. Linda Herman and Ralph Monaco agreed that some language be added to the Statement of Intent about integrating commercial cores with outlying, supporting areas.

Ralph Monaco discussed the intensification of traffic on Route 153 between Bokum and I-95 in Westbrook, and questioned whether the PoCD could address this concern. The Commission discussed the Transportation Study and how to integrate consideration of inter-town transportation connections. John Guskowski stated he would revise the Statement of Intent and then add additional structure to the Major Goals and Objectives.

### **c. Subdivision Regulations – Conservation Land Provisions**

The Commission reviewed the proposed changes to the Conservation Land provisions in the Subdivision Regulations. Ralph Monaco agreed with the proposed hierarchy, but suggested that an additional statement should be included at the end of the introductory paragraph on 6.12.2 to make it clear that should the proposed conservation mechanism be proposed out of the order of the hierarchy, the burden of justification should be on the applicant. The Commission discussed the order of operations of proposal and conservation preference, clarifying that while the Commission was clearly the authority to determine the ultimate disposition of the conservation land, the initial proposal is initiated by the applicant.

Ralph Monaco and John Guskowski stated they would propose language regarding the burden of justification for consideration at the June meeting. John Guskowski will verify if a subdivision regulation amendment requires a public hearing and will discuss with Chairman Danyliw on the procedure for the June meeting.

### **d. Architectural Design Review Committee – Zoning Recommendations**

John Guskowski discussed the process of recommending specific Zoning Regulation changes based on the recommendations of the ADRS. He had questions about the third recommendation, addressing maximum building height in commercial areas. Section 80C does allow height exceedence of up to 45 feet to allow for higher facades, etc. This seems to meet the purpose of the ADRS recommendations, but it is not clear if there was some other regulatory change intended. Similarly, the coverage ratio changes proposed by the ADRS needed additional clarification before proceeding. John Guskowski will communicate with Neil Nichols to develop a proposed approach.

### **e. Ivoryton and STEAP Grant Updates**

John Guskowski stated that the State Committee responsible for reviewing the Ivoryton National Register Nomination would be meeting on June 17, and that the consultant had discussed the possibility of having a joint celebration/public information session if the nomination was approved.

He also discussed the STEAP grant, briefly reviewing the proposed re-development and modified layout of the Town Hall parking area. Based on input from the Planning Commission, the design will include a rain garden stormwater treatment area. He stated

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that the suggestion to incorporate pervious asphalt was discouraged by the design engineer. There was a general discussion about pervious pavement and the Commission requested that John Guskowski re-state the Commission's preference for LID treatments in this project. John Guskowski said he would bring this up again at the design meeting in late May.

### **5. Report of Committees and Officers**

#### **a. Report from TOPPS (Traffic Calming) Subcommittee**

Claire Tiernan was absent, but John Guskowski and Tom Danyliw separately reported discussions with First Selectman Needleman about the recommendations of TOPPS, particularly as concerned Mares Hill Road. First Selectman Needleman indicated that he was not inclined to proceed with the implementation of the speed humps, and thought there were some larger coordination items to be discussed. It is hoped that he will meet with either Planning in June or TOPPS in May.

#### **b. Report from Inland Wetlands Representative**

Claire Tiernan was absent, so there was no Wetlands report.

#### **c. Report from RiverCOG Representative**

Alan Kerr absent, so there was no RiverCOG report.

#### **d. Report from Economic Development Commission Representative**

Bob Laundy reported that EDC's meeting was cancelled.

#### **e. Chairman's Report**

Chairman Danyliw restated that he hopes to have productive conversation between the Planning Commission, the TOPPS Subcommittee, and the Selectmen (as Traffic Authority) about implementation of the Transportation Plan soon.

#### **f. Planner's Report**

John Guskowski reported that he had met with the HOPE Partnership and the Essex Housing Authority, both of whom are exploring new affordable housing opportunities in Town. He also met with the WPCA Chairman and the Town Health Director about pursuing an update of the Wastewater Facilities Master Plan.

### **6. Correspondence and Invoices**

Chairman Danyliw reviewed the correspondence, which included invoices from Doane-Collins and CME Associates. John Guskowski stated that the Doane-Collins invoice was for Safe Routes to School design services, and would be split between Planning and Public Works budgets.

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**Motion to pay invoices** by Linda Herman, **seconded** by Bob Laundry. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### 7. Adjournment

**Motion to adjourn** by Linda Herman, **Seconded** by Bob Laundry. **Motion carried unanimously.**  
Meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Guskowski  
Consulting Town Planner