

Special Meeting

The 1458th meeting of the Town of Stonington's Planning and Zoning Commission was held on Tuesday, December 6, 2011 at Mystic Middle School, 204 Mistuxet Ave., Mystic, CT. Acting Chairman Ben Tamsky called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. Present were Commissioners Rob Marseglia, John Prue, and Bob Mercer; Alternates Frances Hoffman, Curt Lynch, and Gardner Young; and Acting Director of Planning/Town Planner Keith Brynes.

Seated were Mr. Marseglia, Mr. Tamsky, Mr. Mercer, Mr. Prue, and Ms. Hoffman. Ms. Hoffman has been appointed as a Regular commission member but has not been sworn in.

Approval of Minutes:

#1452, September 14, 2011; #1456, November 1, 2011, approved, not signed; #1457, November 15, 2011

Mr. Marseglia made a motion to approve the minutes of September 14th with one correction. Mr. Mercer seconded. The minutes were approved 3-0-2.

Roll Call: Mercer – approve, Marseglia – approve, Tamsky – approve, Prue- abstain, Hoffman - abstain

Mr. Marseglia made a motion to approve the minutes of November 15th with two corrections. Mr. Mercer seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved, 5-0.

Commission Initiatives:

Discussion of 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development

At the Commission's request for past members of the POCD Steering & Implementation Committees to speak about their experiences and lessons learned, both Sara Lathrop and Lynn Young were present. Ms. Lathrop served on the past two rewrites and felt the process for the last one was more comprehensive than it needed to be. The 2004 Implementation Committee that was to meet several times a year with the Planning Office to see where they stood with the points they wanted reached and areas that needed to be focused on. She stated that this had mixed results, noting that one issue was the lack of balanced representation on the Committee, partially due to the late afternoon meeting time, which made it difficult for many people, other than those who were retired, to attend. She felt the committee should have had a more complete town-wide representation, recommending that least one member of the Borough's Planning and Zoning Commission be involved. She felt that Mystic and Pawcatuck were too heavily represented, and that both a former POCD committee member and a current PZC member (but not the Chair), should be involved. Mr. Tamsky asked whether the Implementation Committee had any sort of report. Mr. Brynes said there are minutes and reports, although not many have been done in recent time. Ms. Lathrop noted that the priorities in the previous POCD would need to be reviewed for applicability as they may be met goals or are no longer areas of concern. Mr. Marseglia asked Ms. Lathrop to explain how the previous POCD process was too comprehensive. She said that including every board, commission, and agency's detailed focus became onerous. Mr. Tamsky asked if there were items in the POCD that would come under the jurisdiction of other agencies and boards. Ms. Lathrop replied that there were, such as the Board of Education, WPCA, Economic Development, and other land use commissions. Ms. Hoffman asked what skill sets should committee members possess. Ms. Lathrop suggested that volunteers had to be willing to make a long-term and involved commitment, be residents who work with youth, business people, people sensitive to and knowledgeable of environmental issues, and professionals involved in land use, but obviously not those with applications before the Commissions. She agreed with Bill Haase's assessment from two years ago that the basic structure is already in the current POCD, any required data could come from existing Planning Department Staff, and hiring an outside concern such as Planimetrics would not be necessary. In response to Mr. Lynch's question about an effective number of Committee members, Ms. Lathrop stated there were too many last time, and suggested having no less than six and more than ten. Mr. Prue asked if using questionnaires was helpful, and she responded that their input was limited. She noted that a firm was paid around about \$125,000.00 to perform a telephone questionnaire. Mr. Tamsky asked Ms. Lathrop if she would serve on the committee again, and she said, yes.

Lynn Young served on the previous POCD committee during the time she was a seated member of the PZC. She felt the process was inefficient and there were too many members with a vested interest in one particular aspect of the

Special Meeting

Plan. She said that using Planimetrics was a good move because there was no basis of a plan at that time, and without their efforts, there would still be no plan. She stated that this time, not much needed to be changed in the plan, some things could be removed, but it is not an action document, but is used more for guidance. Ms. Young suggested that since the POCD is a town-wide document, representation needs to be from a cross-section, noting that people who have served on different Town boards are knowledgeable. She said it was important to have well-run public hearings in order to get the public's input. Mr. Tamsky asked if public hearing locale was a factor in public attendance. She suggested caution when appointing members who have personal agendas to make significant changes. Mr. Prue and Mr. Brynes questioned Ms. Young as to addressing existing "flash points." She agreed that they can swallow the entire process as that was what took 90% of the effort. How undeveloped land would be developed is a huge issue because it has the biggest impact on the residents. She noted that there was difficulty getting a full quorum at meetings. Mr. Tamsky questioned whether, if it was determined that help was needed, someone could be hired to work in Town Hall. When asked if she would participate again, Ms. Young said, absolutely not.

After a five-minute recess, Chairman Tamsky moved to address the requests under the Administrative Review section of the agenda, returning to Commission Initiatives at the conclusion.

Administrative Review:

ZON11-269 Sea Research Foundation, Inc. - Relocate public entrance ramp for Titanic exhibit. Property located at 55 Coogan Blvd., Mystic. Assessor's Map 164 Block 3 Lot 2. Zone TC-80.

Attorney Eric Janney and Keith Sorensen presented the application seeking changes to the building entrance to accommodate a planned exhibit commemorating the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic. The proposed changes seek to solve problems with the entrance to the Challenge of the Deep building (to be renamed Ocean Exploration Center), and congestion issues related to passage in and out of the theater. A new concrete mounted walkway with composite deck will be built and the existing Turtle will be repositioned to allow for better access and view.

Mr. Brynes answered Commissioner's questions regarding new signage, noting that the signage is really internal signage. Mr. Prue thought there might be a gray area with the signage that required PZC regulation. Ms. Hoffman asked about safety requirements. Mr. Brynes noted that the Building Official had no issues with the application. As with all applications involving construction, a building permit will be required and the

Mr. Marseglia made a motion to approve the application. Mr. Prue seconded. The application was unanimously approved, 5-0.

PZ0360SD SUP & GPP Meehan Group, LLC (original applicant) / Toll Brothers Inc., (current applicant) – Consideration of modification of plans to include easement areas for approved forty-eight lot subdivision. Property located on Whitehall Ave., Jerry Browne Rd., & Pequot Trail, Old Mystic. Map 165 Block 5 Lots 1 & 14, & Map 148 Block 3, Lots 1 & 3. Zones RA-40 & RR-80.

Mr. Brynes reviewed the new plans which include updated drainage basins. He reviewed the history of the site which in the original 2004 plans had the drainage across Route 27 to a pond for which they have since discovered there is no outlet. Commission members requested more detailed information about the easements.

Mr. Mercer made a motion to table the application. Mr. Prue seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Marseglia asked if the applicant was encouraged to be present at the meeting.

Roy W. Jarvis – Request for release of a 1999 Roadway Improvement Bond for Maple Street, Lords Point for parcel 130-9-2.

Special Meeting

Mr. Brynes reviewed the application. The town has been holding the bond money for almost 12 years. The unusual circumstances were discussed.

Ms. Hoffman made a motion to release the 1999 Roadway Improvement Bond. Mr. Mercer seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Commission returned to discussion of the 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development. At this time Mr. Brynes reviewed the information he gathered regarding the POCD. He had contacted Jason Vincent, now working for Planimetrics, regarding pricing. The Commission discussed how many members should be sought. The consensus was that nine members would be ideal. Ms. Hoffman thought the time at which the meetings occur is very important. Mr. Tamsky asked who would set those parameters.

Review of 2012 meeting schedule:

Mr. Prue had inquired about holding meetings at the Police Station during July and August. The Chief of Police agreed to that. Mr. Prue made a motion to approve the proposed meeting schedule. Mr. Marseglia seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion of modifications to Section 6.6.7 - Excavations and Filling:

Mr. Brynes discussed his first draft of an amendment to the regulation, stating that he had researched other Towns' regulations regarding the same subject. He noted that there needs to be clarification as to which zoning district(s) a gravel bank operation would be permitted.

Commission members discussed specific issues, including questioning the quantity of gravel under a contractor's control. Mr. Prue noted that each situation might be different, dangerous outcroppings, severely changing land elevations, and the effect on water tables, and as such, every situation needed to come before the Commission. Commissioners will continue the review on future agendas. Mr. Prue suggested a ten acre minimum for site stone crushing.

Election of Officers:

Ms. Hoffman needs to be sworn in as a Regular Member prior to holding the election of officers.

Zoning Enforcement & Violations:

PZ0448SD: Mr. Brynes circulated a Notice of Violation issued by WEO Candace Palmer to Anthony Silvestri for the Admiral Cove Subdivision, noting that that any expenses incurred by the Town can be levied against the violator. No bond had been collected from the developer despite being required as a stipulation of approval for the subdivision application. Mr. Prue asked what mechanism could be employed to prevent this type of oversight in the future.

Mr. Prue made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Mercer seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. Chairman Tamsky adjourned the meeting at 9:58 P.M.



1/3/12

Robert Marseglia, Secretary