



Town of Westminister

MASSACHUSETTS 01473
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
PLANNING BOARD

Phone: (978) 874-7414
swallace@westminister-ma.gov

Marie N. Auger - Chairman, Andrew J. Sears - vice chair, M. Donald Barry Michael Fortin William C. Taylor, II

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, March 26, 2012

Room 222, Town Hall

Attendees: Marie Auger, Don Barry, Bud Taylor, Mike Fortin, Stephen Wallace-Town Planner

Absent: Andrew Sears

Additional Attendees: Alana Melanson, Elizabeth Swedberg, Noelle Berard, Ed Simoncini, Jon Wyman, Heather Billings, Brian Ruland, Joe Flanagan, Joshua Schonborg.

7:02p.m. *Minutes*

The Planning Board opened the meeting. Marie informed those present the meeting was being recorded. There was a motion by Don to approve the March 12, 2012 meeting minutes. Seconded by Bud. Voted AIF.

7:03p.m. *Authorize payment to Gardner News for advertising zoning amendment public hearings .*

Bud motioned to authorize payment of \$188.48 to The Gardner News for advertising the zoning amendment public hearings. Seconded Don. The board voted AIF to endorse the plan.

Public Hearings

7:04p.m.- *A new section for Article IX (Special Provisions) that will regulate experimental, residential and small-scale commercial wind power facilities.*

Marie read the public hearing notice for both Zoning proposals.

A new section for Article IX (Special Provisions) that will regulate experimental, residential and small-scale commercial wind power facilities.

Stephen briefly chronicled the process the PB had followed to arrive at the present Wind Bylaw and Regulations. He told those present the PB had eliminated the previous industrial scale bylaw, and combined the Small Commercial, Residential, and Experimental Bylaws into one Bylaw with a separate set of regulations.

- Mike noted the informational handout sheet had been recycled from the public forum and the height and KW ratings were the previous values and should be updated (150' to 225' in height and 100KW to 750KW rating).
- Marie stated she thought the residential wind facilities should be allowed in all use zones because there were residential homes that presently existed in industrial and commercial zones. Bud made a motion to change C-I, C-II, C-III, I-I, I-II use groups in the Table of Use Regulations H(7) Residential Wind Energy Facilities from N(no) to Y(yes). Seconded Don. Voted AIF to amend the draft bylaw.
- Stephen stated that initially he thought industry might want to use wind facilities to power their facilities but upon further review, the extensive fall zones required would

eat up a lot of buildable land that he would rather see built upon and taxed on. He suggested the board might want to place N(no) in the Industrial districts instead of SP(special permit). Marie stated she thought it was fine the way it was and did not want to restrict facilities. Mike stated the identified wind sites were presently in the R-II zones. None had been identified in any Industrial zones. Stephen stated that the argument had been to tread more lightly.

- Selectman Joe Flanagan asked if turbines are industrial development and if so how much tax revenue and how many jobs would result from allowing a turbine vs another use. Stephen said he could answer half the question. Turbine use would be taxed as personal property.
- Ms. Elizabeth Swedberg asked about the rationale of not allowing the sale of energy back to the grid at the residential level. There was discussion about net metering vs the sale of electricity. Net metering was about credits for energy produced and not commercial sale of electricity.

Bud moved that the Westminster Wind Energy Facilities Bylaw public hearing be continued to Monday April 2, 2012 at 7:00p.m. Seconded Mike. Voted AIF.

7:48p.m. An amendment to Article II (Definitions) that will delete the existing "lot area" definition and add a new upland area requirement to the Zoning Bylaw's Table of Use Regulations (Chapter 205, Attachment #1)

Stephen explained the proposed change of eliminating the definition of Lot Area presently in Chapter 205 and replacing it with a footnote #16 in the Table of Uses. As stated previously, Stephen stated he had never seen an overly restrictive provision such as this and stated he was professionally obligated to bring it to the town's attention and present a solution. After some discussion and input from the public, Mike motioned to amend the bylaw language to include language to remove the word "dry" from the upland wording and to add the wording "each lot that is created after the date of the adoption of the bylaw." Bud seconded. Voted AIF.

Bud motioned to close the public hearing. Mike seconded. Voted AIF to close the public hearing.

8:09p.m.

As part of the Town Planner Update, Stephen informed the board two new committees were being created Economic Development Committee. Bud expressed interest in being the PB representative.

The second was a Crocker Pond Management Plan Committee. This would be created after the May Town meeting.

MRPC will be doing a walk-ability study of the Town Center.

8:19p.m.

Bud made a motion to adjourn. Seconded Don. The PB voted AIF to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Fortin

4 Attachments :

- 1) Wind Power Bylaw and Regulations informational handout sheet.
 - 2) Stephen's revised draft footnote to replace definition of lot area.
 - 3) Wind Power Regulations DRAFT(10 pages)
 - 4) Westminster Wind Energy Facilities Zoning Bylaw (New Section 205-39.3 under Article IX) DRAFT (5 pages)
-