

**TOWN OF SOMERS
PLANNING COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 308
SOMERS, CONNECTICUT 06071**

**PLANNING MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
Thursday, January 12, 2006
7:00 p.m. Town Hall**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Karl Walton called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members Cliff Bordeaux, Mike Collins, Karl Walton and Alternates Greg Genlot, Joe Iadarola (seated for Brad Pellissier) and Georgeanne Kuzman (seated for Michelle Hayward) were present and constituted a quorum. Town Planner Patrice Carson and Town Engineer Merv Strauss were also present.

A motion was made by Cliff Bordeaux, seconded by Mike Collins and unanimously voted to take the agenda out of order.

VIII. MINUTES APPROVAL

A motion was made by Mike Collins, seconded by Georgeanne Kuzman and unanimously voted to approve the December 8, 2005 minutes as presented.

A motion was made by Georgeanne Kuzman, seconded by Cliff Bordeaux and voted 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Collins) to approve the November 17, 2005 minutes as presented.

II. OLD BUSINESS

a. Subdivision Application #390: 6-Lots, LaCabana Road (off Mountain View Road), Jalbert

Sandy Aeschliman presented plans for Robert Jalbert, who was also present, and noted that most of the outstanding items have been addressed.

One outstanding issue is the site line distance, which needs to be corrected to meet the 85 percentile traffic speed. To accomplish this, the road will need to be lowered, the neighbor to the east will need a new driveway, and part of their septic system will need to be relocated. The staff met on Wednesday to confirm that these items need to be completed.

Meetings have been held with both abutters and written agreements have been drawn up and signed. Mr. Jalbert has given one of the agreements to staff and expects to submit the remaining one soon.

Discussion followed about the creation of a dry hydrant to be installed on the road opposite the site. It has been determined that once installed by Mr. Jalbert, the dry hydrant will be helpful for fire protection. This was asked for by the Fire Chief. The easements are all in place so just the hydrant needs to be installed. At a meeting with abutter Everett Morrill water drainage concerns around his driveway were discussed and they expect to be fixed at the same time the road work is done. Mr. Jalbert also needs a letter from Mr. Morrill.

Mr. Walton cautioned that the Commission should not plan for the public hearing until the written agreements with the remaining abutters are received by staff. In addition a bond amount and drainage easement to the Town are necessary for review.

Mrs. Carson stated that in order for staff to have adequate time to review everything before the public hearing is set, an extension will be needed from the applicant until February 9, 2006. Mr. Jalbert presented a written extension until that date.

A motion was made by Cliff Bordeaux, seconded by Joe Iadarola and unanimously voted to accept the extension to February 9, 2006, as granted by the applicant.

b. Special Use Permit Application for Age Restricted Housing, Shaker Road, Gingras Development, LLC

Landscape Architect Aris Stalis presented revised plans and noted that most of the comments received from the Town have been addressed. One outstanding issue is that of a request by the WPCA for two parking spaces at the pump station. The plans provide for one space. Since the applicant would like to keep the amount of paving on the site as low as possible, an additional parking space is not something they wish to include.

Mr. Iadarola asked about plantings around the pump station and Mr. Stalis replied that the applicant intends to plant pines and other trees common to the area so that the site will return to a state similar to the way it is now in terms of types of vegetation.

Discussion followed about the pump house size, which Mr. Stalis explained as being a 9-foot high structure with a peaked roof which has been designed to blend with the environment and not look “industrial”. Mr. Strauss recommended that plantings be included which will soften the look but not be overwhelming.

Mr. Strauss stated the importance of not adversely impacting Lafayette Pond and stressed that the applicant must not cause a change in the flow of water in that area.

Mrs. Carson noted that the WPCA has granted its approval of the project as has the Conservation Commission. Two of the model units did not meet the regulations, but revisions in the design are being made and Mrs. Carson suggested Mr. Jacobs be consulted regarding these changes.

The proposed walking trail was designed as following a course surrounding one-half the circumference of the site, with the intention that once formed, the Owners' Association would determine what, if any, further trail would be created. Mrs. Carson and Mr. Strauss suggested that the trail be a complete loop when constructed to avoid having to return and do additional work at the site. It would also then meet the regulation which requires 2,000 square feet per dwelling unit of usable open space like trails. The only other real common open space is the gazebo. The Commission agreed.

A motion was made by Joe Iadarola, seconded by Georgeanne Kuzman and unanimously voted to schedule the public hearing for Thursday, January 26, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

c. Other - No other old business was presented.

III. NEW BUSINESS

a. Zoning Referral: Zoning Commission's Amendment to the Zoning Regulations Section 214-93. Temporary Commercial Uses to Include Uses for Farms

Concern was expressed over why commercial activity was being allowed on a state road yet being excluded from a town road in Paragraph (2). The Commission agreed that farms are inherently commercial entities and they need to have the ability to engage in activities that are generally commercial.

A motion was made by Cliff Bordeaux, seconded by Georgeanne Kuzman and unanimously voted to recommend approval to the Zoning Commission of the proposed amendment with a recommended change: remove the word "commercial" in Paragraph (2) and replace it with the words "accessory and secondary use".

b. Reconfiguration of Lots, 251 & 225 Field Road (Map 02, Block 44, Lot 03 & Map 02, Block 50), Smyth and Avery

The Commission reviewed the plans. The property owners propose to reconfigure the property

by moving one of the property lines to create almost two equal halves. Mrs. Carson noted that there will be no change of use and no effect to any of the zones. The Town Sanitarian has reviewed and approved the proposed reconfiguration.

A motion was made by Joe Iadarola, seconded by Mike Collins and unanimously voted to approve the reconfiguration of property of Robert J. Smyth and Jean & Julia Avery at 251 & 225 Field Road (Map 02, Block 44, Lot 03 & Map 02, Block 50), as shown on map entitled, "Reconfiguration Plan, Zoning Location Survey Prepared For Robert Smyth & Jean Avery, 225 Field Road, Somers, Connecticut", dated: 10/20/2005, 1 sheet. This reconfiguration does not constitute a subdivision because no new lot is created.

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c. 2006/2007 Budget

Mrs. Carson presented the 2006/2007 Budget and noted that a raise of \$10.00 per hour for the Town Engineer was included; this position hasn't seen a raise in over 20 years, which is long overdue. The Commission expressed gratitude for his experience and expertise and agreed with the adjustment.

The Commission questioned the cell phone line item which was not budgeted for and asked Mrs. Carson to get some information on that item for the next meeting.

A decision on the budget was deferred to the next meeting.

d. Election of Officers

A motion was made by Mike Collins, seconded by Joe Iadarola and unanimously approved to re-elect the current slate of officers.

e. Appoint Representative to CRCOG Regional Planning Commission

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A motion was made by Karl Walton, seconded by Cliff Bordeaux and unanimously voted to reappoint Mike Collins as the Planning Commission's representative to the CRCOG Regional Planning Commission, with Brad Pellessier as the alternate representative.

f. Other - No other new business was presented.

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IV. DISCUSSION: PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Carson noted that the open space development regulation is being referred out.

V. STAFF/COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Mrs. Carson reported that she reviewed and issued 13 zoning permits and reviewed 13 certificates of occupancy and issued 10.

Additionally, she has been meeting on a semi-regular basis with Chet Ladd regarding plans for his commercial property on South Road. Other items she has been working on include the Whitaker Open Space Grant, the Hayes negotiations regarding the County Road drainage situation, a study on expanding Woodcrest into the cemetery area, several preliminary subdivisions, and the Somers Library expansion plan.

The Whitaker property purchase was successfully approved at Town Meeting.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - There was none.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS

No correspondence was presented. A bill was presented for the Town Engineer work in the second quarter in the amount of \$4,387.50. A motion was made by Cliff Bordeaux, seconded by Georgeanne Kuzman and unanimously voted to pay the bill as presented.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mike Collins, seconded by Georgeanne Kuzman, and unanimously voted to adjourn the January 12, 2006 Planning Commission meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Pellissier, Secretary
Secretary

Robin Timmons, Recording

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING.