

Planning Board Workshop Minutes

MAY 31, 2000

Joint Meeting With Conservation Board

Planning Board Roll Call:

Russ Wilder, Chairman - Present
Alan Carpenter, Vice Chairman - Present
Lisa Linowes, Secretary - Present
Margaret Crisler, Selectmen Member - Present
Ross Mcleod, Regular Member - Excused
Wayne Morris, Regular Member - Present
Walter Kolodziej, Regular Member - Present
Roger Hohenberger, Selectmen Member Alt. - Present

Conservation Board Roll Call:

Cherie Howell, Chairman - Present
Betsy Carlson, Member - Present
Cristy Davis, Member - Present
Bernie Rouillard, Alternate - Present
Gerry Capron, Member - Present

Meeting Began at 7:20pm.

This was the first joint workshop meeting of the conservation board and the planning board since the existing planning board was empanelled.

WWPD Infringements:

Ms. Howell and Mr. Rouillard expressed concerns regarding the number of applications coming before the conservation board that proposed encroachments on the WWPD. There was extended discussion as to the importance of the WWPD and what efforts we can make to stem this tendency. It was acknowledged that we are apt to see more of this in the future as applicants try to build on less than optimal land.

In addition to issues of construction in the WWPD, the boards discussed how Windham citizens are not aware of the WWPD and would not necessarily know whether any part of their property crossed WWPD boundaries.

Some ideas discussed to better maintain the integrity of the WWPD included:

1. In a lot contained a WWPD crossing, the planning board would require details on the specific location of the house, garage and driveway.
2. The board will consider requiring WWPDs around vernal pools and other wet lands that are smaller than 1 acre. A 50 foot buffer was proposed.
3. Require that all homeowner plans show restricted areas (WWPD) and all deeds would include specific language on the WWPD and associated conservation easements.

4. Require that the builder clearly mark the WWPD for homeowners prior to closing.
5. State specifically that lawns, driveways and buildings are not allowed in the WWPD. Restructure the WWPD ordinance (601.1, 3, 4) to make it more explicit as to what cannot be done in the WWPD. The conservation board agreed to review the ordinance.

Land Swap:

The boards discussed the land swap voted on by the citizens in March, 2000. Conservation proposed a joint site walk on 6/11 at 8:30 AM to evaluate the advantages/disadvantages of the swap and whether the swap should occur. The land is off Timberline Road near the intersection of Castle Hill and London Bridge.

Railroad Bed Conveyance:

The Conservation board raised questions/concerns as to why the board of Selectmen was considering taking ownership of part of the old railroad bed. In particular, Mr. Roubilard asked whether ownership of the railroad bed would facilitate development, which was not the intent of the town.

Ms. Crisler explained that Mr. Bobby Devlin wanted to get an easement to his land on the other side of the railroad bed.

Other discussion regarding the railroad bed included:

1. Would the town be eligible for grants to improve the trail?
2. Do we want the land? Can we foresee a possible recreational purpose?
3. Would we place a conservation easement on the land to ensure no development?
4. If the town needs to repair the trail and erect some gates, money would need to be appropriated for this purpose.

It was noted that Windham does not have a land trust. If there were a land trust any land maintenance expenses would not be subject to town meeting.

Open Space Zoning:

The boards discussed the Open Space ordinance with the intent of making it more flexible regarding what we can control. Criteria discussed were:

1. Identification and preservation of vistas.
2. Water quality issues - protection of the WWPD/Wetlands.
3. Wildlife corridors and habitats.
4. Historical preservation.
5. Trail preservation.
6. Contiguous/useable open space.
7. Preservation of significant and unique natural features including trees, meadows, bogs and glacial boulders.

The board suggested adopting a policy of open space subdivisions being presented first.

I-93 Mitigation:

The boards discussed the importance of being proactive regarding the areas we want to be mitigated. Al Turner is to keep us posted. The Conservation board will compose a letter to the I-93 task force regarding all of the areas we want consideration and protection.

Master Plan Status:

There are good drafts on every section of the master plan. Planning board agreed to deliver the drafts to all town boards for review.

Other Issues Discussed:

The board agreed not to have a planning board meeting (workshop or regular meeting) on July 5th, 2000. The motion was made by Ms. Crisler and seconded by Mr. Kolodziej. The motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Turner raised the issue of the Griffin Park detention pond and the closed drainage plan. Mr. Turner informed the board that all of the trees were downed in the area where the detention pond was to go. Closed drainage was a deviation of the original plan approved by the planning board last year. An emergency Selectmen meeting was called for June 1st .

These minutes are in draft form and have not been submitted for approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Linowes

