



OLD VALUES - NEW HORIZONS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Windham Economic Development Committee
WEDC
Meeting Minutes
Friday, July 12, 2013

Present: Chairman, Paul Gosselin; Members: Bruce Breton, Jim Coburn, Dianne Connolly, Susan Denopolis, Bev Donovan, Al Letizio, Michael Oldenburg, R. Valentine, Sy Wrenn,

Admin Staff: Laura Scott

Absent: K. DiFruscia,

Chairman Gosselin opened the meeting at 7:36 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

VOTED: On motion made (S. Wrenn) and seconded (B. Donovan), the minutes of the June meeting were approved with corrections. 9-0-1 (B. Breton abstaining). In discussion, Chairman Gosselin requested that, in keeping with other committee practices, guests be identified as planned or requested speakers and audience attendees not be specifically identified.

Infrastructure Subcommittee – R. Valentine – No meetings since the last WEDC meeting; upcoming meeting with DES for discussion of water survey should occur later in July.

Land Use – B. Donovan – Meeting in late June approved the subcommittee's previous meeting minutes and reviewed past work to bring new members up to date. The group noted that the Planning Board has identified two new subcommittees, one on Neighborhood Business districts and one on Aquifer Protection. WEDC is ready to participate.

Planning Board Update – S. Wrenn – It was noted that the Planning Board is not asking the WEDC to participate in its current subcommittee work. Extended discussion ensued underscoring the value WEDC could and should bring to discussions of business districts and aquifer impact on developed land. Mr. Letizio particularly objected as the BOS liaison to the WEDC, as the BOS has structured and appointed the WEDC to be involved in exactly such discussions.

VOTED: On motion made (B. Donovan) and seconded (A. Letizio) the committee authorized Chairman Gosselin to draft a letter to the Planning Board requesting WEDC's official participation in subcommittee work that involves commercial and business development. 9-0-1 (S. Wrenn abstaining).

Discussion continued regarding a recent Planning Board meeting at which the Route 111 light was discussed. Mr. Letizio noted that there were more WEDC members in the audience than there were Planning board members in attendance, which showed the WEDC interest in the subject. Numerous WEDC members then noted that a Planning Board member remarked that the Planning Board represents the taxpayers while the WEDC represents only business and developer interests in the community. Mr. Breton and Mr. Letizio strongly objected noting the origins of the WEDC, the Mission, especially Section 1 of the WEDC charter, and the balanced manner in which the WEDC has approached numerous issues over the past few years – many in partnership with other town committees. WEDC members were particularly concerned that the Chair of the Planning Board did not correct the member's remarks, and this implied assent.

APPROVED



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VOTED: On motion made (R. Valentine) and seconded (M. Oldenburg), the committee agreed to have Chairman Gosselin send a letter to the Chairman of the Planning Board, copying the Board of Selectmen, clearly noting the WEDC's Mission, charter and composition as broadly representative and further requesting that the letter be read into those Boards' minutes.

Communications Subcommittee – A. Letizio – The subcommittee asks the WEDC support for putting informational articles together following each WEDC meeting to be posted on the town web site and distributed to local media outlets as a way of informing the wider community about the work of the WEDC and those issues which may impact the town. Ms Scott offered her email blast program.

VOTED: On motion made (B. Breton) and seconded (R. Valentine), the committee approved the WEDC's initiative. 10-0-0. The first article will be done on the composition and Mission of the WEDC.

TRC – J. Coburn – Two recent meetings have resulted in 3 commercial properties reviewed. On a procedural issue, Mr. Coburn asked for a WEDC contact if he had concerns about the level of his support for various projects. Mr. Gosselin directed him to the WEDC Chairman.

In deference to time, Mr. Letizio requested that consideration of WEDC officers be moved up on the Agenda. Mr. Gosselin approved and discussion proceeded to nominate officers for the WEDC.

VOTED: On motion made (P. Gosselin) and seconded (B. Donovan), Mr. Ralph Valentine was elected Chairman of the WEDC. 9-0-1 (R. Valentine abstaining).

VOTED: On motion made (A. Letizio) and seconded (B. Donovan), Ms Dianne Connolly was elected Vice Chairman of the WEDC. 9-0-1 (D. Connolly abstaining).

Ms Connolly agreed to continue to take meeting minutes until a new member can be identified and elected as Secretary.

BOS Update – A. Letizio – The traffic light at Route 111 and 111a continues to be discussed with alternative options being offered. Discussion followed.

VOTED: On motion made (R. Valentine) and seconded (B. Donovan), the committee agreed to have Mr. Letizio ask the Board of Selectmen to review the alternative options and additionally requested that the WEDC be part of the conversation. 9-0-1 (R. Valentine abstains)

Further discussion involved the sign advertising school events requested by the Booster Club of the high school for a large, scrolling sign to be placed in what may be right of way. While noting the school's ability to supersede town regulations, the committee expressed concerns, not least of which that the selected property is currently "in play" for purchase. The committee urged Mr. Letizio to ask the BOS to gather further information about location and full impact before a decision is made.

Chamber – Bev Donovan – Noted the Chamber's calendar of events and requested WEDC presence.

Community Development – L. Scott – Updates will be emailed to WEDC members.

Purchasing Policy – has previously been emailed to WEDC members. Mr. Letizio requested that the WEDC discuss this at its August meeting and he will ask the BOS to wait until the WEDC has offered its input before finalizing the policy.

Chairman Gosselin adjourned the meeting at 9:43.

APPROVED