

**WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION
APPROVED MINUTES
Monday, August 11, 2014**

Members present: Becca Washburn, Chair; Ken Belliveau, Jeff Kampion
Staff present: Steve Lotspeich, Community Planner;
Public: Lefty Sayah

The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA REVIEW

The Planning Commission reviewed the agenda and did not make any modifications.

DISCUSS THE PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF FLOODPLAIN PROTECTION

The Commission discussed the presentation that Roy Schiff of the consulting firm, Milone & MacBroom, Inc. gave on July 14th on his firm's project that is: "Evaluating the Costs and Benefits of Floodplain Protection Activities in Waterbury, Vermont and Willsboro, New York, Lake Champlain Basin". Roy had also presented an update on their project to map floodplain areas in the Village of Waterbury.

Steve Lotspeich explained that he has given Roy grand list data for properties in the 100-year floodplain in the Village and will also be giving him data from the lister's cards that includes square footage and the condition of the buildings. This data will be used to analyze the value of the residential and commercial/industrial properties within the 100-year floodplain in relationship to the property values of the entire Village. Steve mentioned that the Village Trustees are very concerned about the impact that flooding, flood insurance rates, and flood hazard area regulations have on the values of the properties within the 100-year floodplain in the Village.

Jeff Kampion inquired about the possibility of creating a berm in the State cornfield to protect settled areas of the Village. It was stated that levees and berms generally do not solve the issues of flooding and the associated damages to property located in a Vermont community such as Waterbury. The alternative is to re-connect floodplain areas by excavating these areas of the 100-year floodplain, lower the level of the 100-year flood, and possibly compensate for development/re-development in the floodplain and any associated fill. Re-connecting floodplain areas can also be accomplished by removing berms such as old railroad bed fills.

DISCUSS POSSIBLE POLICIES AND SCENARIOS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE FLOODPLAIN

The Commission discussed possible policies and scenarios for development in the floodplain that will provide the basis for re-writing the Flood Hazard Area Regulations and other regulatory and non-regulatory programs.

It was requested that we get information regarding how the state office complex re-construction will impact the 100-year floodplain. Steve will obtain this information and pass it along to the

Planning Commission.

Becca Washburn asked how we are going to move forward beyond being educated about the floodplain/river dynamics phase of this project. Ken Belliveau stated that we need some additional information from Roy Schiff on the modeling for development such as what is the impact of filling in the basements of the buildings located in the 100-year floodplain.

Becca Washburn suggested that we need to decide how different districts of the Village will be regulated such as the Designate Downtown, Village Historic District, and industrially zoned areas. The review standards and criteria could relate to types of uses such as commercial/industrial use.

Moving forward it was decided that the discussion needs to be broken down into topics such as how to handle fill in the floodplain, freeboard for the elevation of the lowest floor above the base-flood elevation (100-yr. floodplain), whether to regulate the 500-year floodplain, how to regulate types of uses such as commercial/industrial/residential and critical facilities, how to handle historic buildings, and variations in the regulations based on different districts. New development should be separated from renovations and additions to existing buildings, especially as it relates to historic buildings.

It was suggested to publish an article in the Waterbury Record about this issue to stimulate public interest. The public probably won't get involved in larger numbers until there is controversy or a draft of the flood hazard area regulations to react to.

Becca Washburn asked about what information is needed to inform the discussion. Roy Schiff's modeling data on the impact of filling basements and other scenarios will be very beneficial to the discussion.

Steve Lotspeich will draft a revised timeline with topics identified to discuss at each meeting moving forward. The plan is to discuss two topics at each meeting with the understanding that only one may be dealt with and discussion of the second topic may be continued to the next meeting. By publicizing the topics for each meeting that may stimulate some interest and participation on the part of the public.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on July 14, 2014 were reviewed.

MOTION

Ken Belliveau moved and Jeff Kampion seconded the motion to approve the minutes of July 14, 2014.

VOTE

The motion was approved unanimously.

PLANNER'S REPORT

Steve Lotspeich reported that Zoe Gordon has started as Waterbury's third VISTA member on Friday, August 8th. She is working on many flood recovery projects including the Municipal

Complex and the Village to Little River State Park Trail Feasibility Study.

Steve reported that the Blush Hill Meadows and Alchemist projects are still in the Act 250 permitting process.

Steve has requested that Ryan Morrison prepare a written Zoning Administrator's Report for the next Planning Commission meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Monday, August 25th at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Lotspeich
Community Planner

*These minutes were approved on August 25, 2014.