

WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
Approved Minutes
Monday, November 2, 2015

Planning Commission: Rebecca Washburn, Chair; Judi Kamien.

Staff present: Steve Lotspeich, Community Planner; Judi Byron, Secretary.

Community members: Gunner McCain, Kathleen Daye, Zoe Gordon, Stephen Van Esen, Skip Flanders, Roy Lloyd, Natalie Howell-Sherman, and Paul Reed.

Rebecca Washburn called the Planning Commission (PC) meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Rebecca Washburn opened the Public Informational Meeting on Draft #2 of the Amendments to the Flood Hazard Area Regulations for the Town and Village of Waterbury.

Rebecca introduced the discussion by stating that the goal was to be balanced between the greatest public good (safety) and being mindful of economic costs. Elevating utilities or elevating structure has the greatest cost benefit. Steve summarized the changes to the public and talked about the review criteria. The Town of Richmond has guidelines for procedures to address the How To questions, alternatives, and the variance process. Steve will get copies of this for the Public Hearing on the amendments on November 9th.

A question was raised as to the discrepancy between the FEMA mapping and the mapping done by Roy Schiff with the firm of Milone and MacBroom. It was explained that the FEMA maps are based on flow data from the last 100+ years which show an average that is not alarming. Roy's data looked at the last 45 years which saw a trend for a higher flow rate and possibly more frequent flooding. Climate change could also be a factor. The LIDAR ground modeling data that FEMA used was also incomplete which led to some fudged boundary lines, especially for the 500-yr. floodplain.

Rebecca talked of a possible Letter of Map Amendment based on the Milone and MacBroom study but there could be repercussions such as adding numerous properties into the 100-year floodplain. Flood mapping will change on its own course over time. If we redo the model, we would have to rethink other aspects. But knowing storms are intensifying we can elevate structures. If we need a map amendment we can come back to it.

Gunner McCain mentioned that if the map changes then zoning follows. He commended the PC for being proactive. He also commented that 500-yr. elevation data may not be available for the smaller streams. Steve offered to research this issue and get back to Gunner regarding the extent of the FEMA stream profile data.

Gunner raised a question on exclusion of ponds from the exemption from flood area review. He also had a question regarding how recreational vehicles are viewed in different flood zones.

The public was encouraged to reach out to the PC or Steve if there were any concerns or

questions. There will be a public hearing on this draft next Monday, November 9th.

AGENDA REVIEW

No changes to the agenda were made.

COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

DISCUSS PREPARATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC HEARINGS ON AMENMENTS TO THE FLOOD HAZARD AREA AND CAMPUS & DOWNTOWN AREA ZONING BYLAWS

ACTION ITEMS for the November 9th meeting:

1. Have Roy's slides at the Public Hearing.
2. Put the announcement for the hearing on the website by Wednesday.
3. Put at blast on WDEV, and Front Porch Forum.
4. Have the map printed out with other and handouts.
5. Who among the people are leaders and are critical that may need to be contacted? Skip Flander's concerns need to be addressed. Bill Shepeluk and Chris Nordle have raised challenging issues in the past. Becca will reach out to Chris.

Steve answered the questions to the PC that Gunner raised on the ponds and recreational vehicles and will revisit these issues at the next meeting. Steve will get a written description of how the variance process works for flood hazard area review from David Rugh, municipal attorney.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was conducted.

STATE PERMITTING

The Verizon Cell Tower is a hot issue.

Joe McLean, attorney with Stitzel, Page and Fletcher is representing both Waterbury and Stowe on this issue.

Verizon may be willing to look at alternative sites.

There was discussion regarding how making a 90 foot cell tower look like a tree doesn't necessarily work.

The landowners are requesting a wildlife study but the town is not. Is that an issue? The Agency of Natural Resources is doing the study. Jesse Mohr was hired by a group of adjacent and nearby landowners to address the wildlife issue.

There will be another meeting with the state Agency of Natural Resources on Friday the 13th

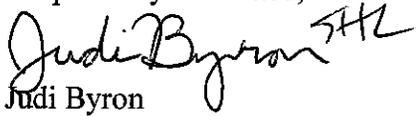
There is a study of the Wildlife Crossing issue that Steve will email out to the PC.

The PC felt that things were being handled well by the professionals and felt if there was something they could add to the mix, great, otherwise let the professionals keep on with their due diligence.

ADJOURNMENT

The PC meeting was adjourned at 8:01 pm

Respectfully submitted,

The image shows a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judi Byron". To the right of the signature, there are three handwritten initials "SHZ".

Judi Byron
Secretary

These minutes were approved on * December 14, 2015 *