

**WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING – SELECT BOARD PUBLIC HEARING**

**Approved Minutes**  
**Monday, October 15, 2018**

Planning Commission: Eric Gross, Mary Koen, Ken Belliveau

Others Present:

Select Board: C. Viens, M. Metayer, J. Brown, and M. Frier

Staff: W. Shepeluk, Municipal Manager; S. Lotspeich, Community Planner; A. Imhoff, ORCA Media; and C. Lawrence, Town Clerk.

Public: Judy Foregger, Rob Foregger, Duncan McDougall, Everett Coffey, Annie Coffey, Nick Nadeau, Tracy Sweeney.

The Chairs of the Planning Commission and Select Board called their meetings to order at 7:00pm.

The Select Board Public Hearing for Draft #2 of the Municipal Plan update commenced at 7:00pm.

K. Belliveau gave a brief synopsis of the work that has been done on the plan throughout the years. He stated that the recent updates focus on a revised energy plan and updated natural resources chapter for forest fragmentation. It also reflects that there is no longer the Village government and updates the data in the local economy section.

S. Lotspeich gave a presentation and stated that the purpose of the current Draft Plan is to update the 2013 Municipal Plan that will expire on December 9<sup>th</sup> of this year. The updated Draft Plan is focused on select chapters and statistics to be consistent with the requirements in state statutes. He stated that the Select Board has the opportunity to make substantive changes, and there will be a second public hearing in December.

S. Lotspeich spoke briefly about the requirements in state statute. He reviewed the chapters that were focused on including Chapter 4 – Local Economy, Chapter 6 – Natural Resources, Chapter 7 – Energy, Chapter 9 – Facilities, Chapter 10 – Local Government, and Chapter 11 – Land Use.

A discussion was held with regard to forest fragmentation. The public was then invited to comment.

D. McDougall stated he was impressed with the document put together for the energy plan, but strongly recommended that the Select Board and Planning Commission form a representative group to review the recommendations and make sure they are being implemented. S. Lotspeich read the language that was previously added to the draft Plan that addresses this comment.

T. Sweeney, a member of the Conservation Commission, invited the Select Board to learn more about the wildlife in the Shutesville Hill area through the Conservation Commission.

M. Frier asked if the housing demand section should be reevaluated and whether the data was accurate. He also expressed concern about affordability and whether more housing supply could be encouraged to

meet the demand. S. Lotspeich stated that the Town is lucky to have the development it has and there is a significant increase in single and multifamily dwellings occurring now. Opportunities are provided through zoning, and affordable housing has been supported through the revolving loan funds. A discussion ensued on affordable housing.

C. Viens commented that increases in the municipal tax rate contribute to the lack of affordability for housing. The cost of land and infrastructure are also major contributors to the lack of affordability. Permitting, especially Act 250 costs are a big factor too.

J. Foregger commented that a shortage of housing supply and the cost of building materials and labor are major factors in the lack of affordability as well.

The issue of Waterbury being a one-acre town for Act 250 jurisdiction for commercial projects was discussed in light of possibly moving to a ten-acre threshold for Act 250 jurisdiction. The Select Board has the authority to change the threshold by changing or eliminating the town ordinance that applies to this. This issue is more appropriate to address in conjunction with the zoning re-write that is underway.

M. Metayer stated that his take away from the conversation is that a working group needs to be formed to shepherd the energy related goals and recommendations, a housing taskforce should be formed as noted for consideration in the housing chapter.

B. Shepeluk commented that the constraints of land and terrain limit density for housing outside our village areas. Air B & B is also a driving factor for the development and availability of affordable housing and the supply of housing for long-term rentals. Limiting short-term rentals may be something the Planning Commission should consider in the zoning re-write as a way to address this concern.

T. Sweeny commented that we should collaborate with partners such as Downstreet Housing and Community Development to address the issue of homelessness and the provision of adequate shelter for homeless people.

The members of the Select Board offered overall support for the draft Municipal Plan update and did not request any substantial changes to Draft #2. The Select Board reiterated support for the implementation actions in the Plan to form an energy working group and a housing task force.

S. Lotspeich explained that the Select Board will need to warn their second required public hearing to be held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. A motion to warn the hearing will need to be made at their next meeting on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

The Public Hearing closed at 8:07 p.m. and the Planning Commission adjourned their meeting

Respectfully submitted,



Steve Lotspeich, Acting Secretary