

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 14, 2016**

Members Present: Chris Vincent (Chair); Kathy Kingston (Vice-Chair); John Barnett (Clerk);  
Matt Conklin; Randy Major, Kevin Hughes

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager / Planning & Zoning Administrator); Karen  
Astley (Recording Clerk)

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chris Vincent (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
2. **ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA:** None
3. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** John Barnett made a motion to accept the minutes as written.  
Kevin Hughes seconded the motion. **Motion passed.**
4. **COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT:** None
5. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):**

**a) Final Revised Zoning Bylaws:** Russ Hodgkins mentioned to the Planning Commission the deadline for approval of the Zoning Bylaws is Spring 2017. Russ wants the Planning Commission and Development Review Board to finalize changes in order for the Select Board to review and begin Public Hearings. Russ stated legal counsel, Windham Regional Commission will get a copy once PC and DRB have signed off on final version. Planning Commission will review in its entirety and have comments for the next regular scheduled meeting on December 12.

Kathy Kingston recommended that the Planning Commission split the review process. John, Matt and Kevin will review to Article 9 and Chris, Kathy and Randy will take from Article 9 to finish. Each group will review table of contents.

6. **NEW BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):**
  - a) **Act 250 Business:** Russ Hodgkins stated Lot 2 (Sovern) in the Westminster Business Park is moving forward with development of solar arrays. Russ let the Planning Commission know that all the lots in the business park would contain solar arrays. The National Guard was leasing three lots for a 1.8 megawatt array solely for the Guards. Nextsun has one lot and Sovern was developing the last lot.

The question was raised whether or not the taxation on solar arrays in Westminster had been worked out. Based on state legislation towns can tax solar arrays but towns do not get full benefit as the education tax absorbs the majority of taxable revenue.

**b) PSB Business:** No new information was available at this time.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):**

**a) 2016 Planning Commission Report for Town Report:** Chris Vincent stated he would write the article for the town report on behalf of the Planning Commission. Discussion ensued what content should be included in the report. Members suggested adoption of the Town Plan specifically sections pertaining to mitigation, flood resilience, and housing being key elements. Russ Hodgkins mentioned the process of combining Industrial and Commercial districts for ease of development was another critical element. Chris Vincent will include in the report John Medeiros service and the introduction of Kevin Hughes.

**b) Noise:** Kathy Kingston informed the Commission that some towns have “No Noise” on Sundays. Specifically, no shooting of guns. Perhaps Westminster could consider an ordinance which may mitigate the shooting of guns at all hours of the day.

A discussion further developed with questions regarding hunting season and what the schedule was. Russ Hodgkins stated there is a four-week window for deer hunting from rifle to muzzle loader starting in November.

The Commission further discussed that residents should educate themselves of the various seasons when hunting is allowed by the state. Russ Hodgkins stated that if there was incessant shooting at all hours of the day and night a resident should contact the Sheriff’s Department as this is not normal. Most hunters are aware of the rules and there are penalties if they abuse them. Shooting out of season and during the night is an indication that shooting is taking place illegally.

**8. DATE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING:** December 12, 2016 at 7:00 P.M.

**9. ADJOURNMENT:** Kathy Kingston made a motion to adjourn at 8:14 PM. Randy Major seconded the motion. **The motion passed and the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.**

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Signature of Clerk

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Date

Prepared by: Karen M. Astley, Recording Clerk