

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
DECEMBER 8, 2014**

Members Present: John Medeiros (Chair), John Barnett (Clerk), Matt Conklin, Randy Major

Not Present: Chris Vincent (Vice-Chair), Kathy Kingston

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager / Planning & Zoning Administrator)

CALL TO ORDER: Medeiros called this Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:05 PM in the Westminster Town Hall. He noted that a full Board was not present. He advised that meetings are tape recorded therefore asked anyone wishing to speak to identify themselves for the record.

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: No adjustments. No new information on the Basin Farm.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: John Barnett moved to approve the Minutes of the November 10, 2014, meeting, as printed. Seconded by Matt Conklin. Minutes were approved by a 4-0-0 vote.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT: Hodgkins had three items to discuss:

1. Russ distributed Findings of Fact for review of two applications presented to the DRB. Application 14-36 Burtco, Inc. and 15-15 David Gorham Living Trust. Russ gave a verbal summary on the two applications. Russ explained the process of Findings of Facts and let the PC know they would be getting copies in the future as a means of having an idea of what is going through the DRB.
2. John Medeiros asked about the PC budget for 2015-2016. Russ explained he put a budget in for the Planning Commission. John questioned Russ about making up the budget and all agreed with the budget numbers so no changes were needed.

NEW BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):

Act 250 Business, If Any: Sale of a trailer in Shady Pines which required no Act 250 or action from the PC. There was no new Act 250 business to come before this meeting.

PSB Business, If Any: There was no new PSB business to come before this meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):

Town Plan Updates:

Economy: Insert profile pages 10 and 11 of 66 pages. Insert Federal Census Statistics paragraph. Discussion on Federal Census statistics (2001-2011). Where did the numbers come from and are they accurate for what we are reporting. US Census is every ten years based on history and it reflects employment types.

John Barnett made the motion to approve the modifications. Matt Conklin seconded. The motion was approved by a 4-0-0 vote.

Economic Development (Page 56): Minor revisions and additions. Randy Major wanted to discuss the sentence “the pattern of out-of-town spending.....” mentioning that although the town is not yearning for but the sentence implies we want a shopping center in town”. Discussion ensued that the intent of the Planning Commission was not to have urban sprawl in Westminster. Residents working out of town is not hurting the town.

John Barnett made a motion to approve the modifications. John Medeiros seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0-0 vote.

Program for Implementation of the Town Plan (Page 62): All strike outs are to come out of the Town Plan. Add last paragraph to this section.

Discussion: Regarding newly inserted paragraph. Monitoring of timely implementation will let residents realize that development is occurring and that the Planning Commission will be monitoring progress.

John Barnett made a motion to approve the modifications and additions. John Medeiros and Randy Major seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0-0 vote.

Compatibility with Plans of Adjacent Towns: Discussion opened by John Barnett: John did research relative to the sharing of boundary lines by adjacent towns. He went through the surrounding towns Town Plans for reference of land use provisions. He followed the Brookline template as it was more compatible with Westminster. John would like this section added to the Town Plan.

Projects Implemented, any new additions for the new plan?: Matt Conklin stated the Fire Department yes; Historical Society, no although they just purchased Bradley Law Office.

Guide to Revisions: John Medeiros stated in the current Town Plan there is no summary of the revisions and in the new Town Plan there would be a quick guide of where to look for new material. People will need to find pages in revised proposed Town Plan.

Map(s) Work: Zoning Commercial / Industrial: The Planning Committee brought out the zoning district map and discussed in length the benefits of combining commercial and industrial on the Route 5 corridor that is now designated commercial. This area would be from West Station to Kissell Hill. Route 123 would remain in the industrial district. This topic was brought up back in February 2012. Medeiros supports combining commercial and industrial zones as it will regulate industrial development more so than in the past. Land use development will require a bylaw revision with limitations if the zones are combined. Combining these two districts will allow more flexibility for business owners.

Discussion was this combined district would be considered the “growth center”. Would this require a new label for the district or do we name it commercial/industrial? Should the Planning Commission label/name each parcel within the “growth center”? What are the criteria of this “growth center”? The business park is 60/40 split and protected Agricultural land containing 60 acres, how do we address this?

Randy Major questioned how do we combine the commercial / industrial zones into the “growth center” under the Economic Development?

Planning Commission to check with absent members Chris Vincent and Kathy Kingston for input.

Russ Hodgkins offered to rewrite the description that will encompass this proposed zoning district.

John Barnett made a motion to combine zoning districts of commercial and industrial to one zone commercial/industrial. Randy Major seconded the motion with the understanding they may reconsider depending on input from Kathy and Chris. The motion was approved by a 4-0-0 vote.

Randy Major made a motion that the Commercial/Industrial district be designated as the town “growth center”. John Medeiros seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0-0 vote.

District Line Adjustment: Bazin Farm US Route 5 parcel number 008086 containing 2.4 acres was discussed as whether or not moving the zoning district line from Residential Zoning District to Village District would this set a precedent in the rest of the town? Minimum lot acreage is one acre so this would make no difference to permits on file.

Changing the district line would allow Planned Unit Development which can allow more than one house on a lot. Lot sizes have been waived in the past but when the house sells than the lot will be noncompliant.

John Medeiros made a motion to add this property to the West Station Village Zoning District by readjusting zoning district line. Matt Conklin seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0-0 vote.

No other concerns in any other zoning districts.

Implementation of Town Plan: End of January Planning Commission would like to have a draft Town Plan to counsel.

DATE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING: January 12, 2015 at 7:00 PM

OTHER BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: John Barnett moved to adjourn meeting. The motion was seconded by Matt Conklin approved by a 4-0-0 vote at 8:49 PM.

Signature of Clerk

Date

Prepared by: Karen M. Astley, Recording Secretary

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, will be found in the Minutes of the February 9, 2015, Planning Commission meeting.)