

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
August 10, 2015**

Members Present: John Medeiros (Chair), Chris Vincent (Vice Chair), Matt Conklin and  
VIA Teleconference: John Barnett (Clerk)

Absent: Kathy Kingston & Randy Major

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** John Medeiros called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**2. ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA:** NONE

**3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** Three revisions to minutes from July 13, 2015.

Item 5 (b) – 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph should read “Language such as “should”, “encourage” or “promote” are legally weak and should be addressed when revising the Zoning Bylaws.

Item 6 (b) – fourth line down should read “\$ 35,000 +/-”.

Item 6 (b) – fourth paragraph should read “metering”, not meeting.

**John Barnett made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Chris Vincent seconded the motion.  
VOTE 4-0-0.**

**4. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT:** No one present from public.

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):**

**A) : Town Plan Update 6.1 Draft :** John Barnett had two minor changes that he found. (1) Page 45 – recommendation # 5 the word growth needs two parenthesis not just the one. (2) Page 48 – under Flood Resilience – second line flooding or water inundation should read flooding *and* water inundation.

John Medeiros added his thought to the conversation about adding, to the front page, the date that the Planning Commission approved and adopted the Town Plan 6.1 Draft. It was unanimously decided to place the date on the front page.

**Chris Vincent made the motion to accept the Draft 6.1 of the Town Plan with revisions as the Final Draft to be brought in front of the public. John Medeiros seconded and the motion passed 4-0-0.**

**B): PC Public Hearing dates and warning times:** The Commission came to a consensus that September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015 would be an acceptable date to have the first “Public Hearing” on accepting the Town Plan. This would give the Planning Commission the first wave of comments to view at their next meeting slated for the 14<sup>th</sup> of September. Russ Hodgkins agreed to contact the missing Commission members and run the dates by them before posting the Hearing. It was also discussed having the meeting at the Town Hall at 7:00, but have the Institute ready if numbers become an issue.

**6. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion / Action):**

**A): Act 250 Business, If Any:** None

**B) : PSB Business, If Any:** John Barnett asked for an explanation of the new Sovern Solar “Pilot Agreement” and how this would affect taxation of the project proposed in our “Industrial Park”. Russ Hodgkins explained that Peter Thurrell visited his office and proposed a “Pilot Agreement” in lieu of taxation for 20 years. He explained that it is the Selectboard’s view that the amount disclosed for the agreement is not taking into account for the land taxation. This will be taxed above and beyond the “Agreement”, if accepted.

After a brief discussion, the unanimous concern from the Commission was the amount of time of this contracted agreement (20 years). John Medeiros requested that the Commission have Russ Hodgkins report this concern to the Selectboard and propose a much lesser amount of time, such as 5 years before allowing taxation to be imposed.

**C) : Start Discussion on procedures/plans for drafting new Zoning Bylaws :** The Chair, John Medeiros, asked the Zoning Administrator to supply the Commission with a copy of the existing “Interim Bylaws” for the next meeting. The Commission was asked by the DRB to proceed with revising the Bylaws one section at a time so that the DRB can impose comments for reconstructing them as the process goes, not just a lump sum of changes at the end.

Chris Vincent requested that the Planning Commission add a section of the new Bylaws to the regulation of “Drone” use in the Town of Westminster. Russ Hodgkins explained that he has already had a complaint of a “Drone” flying low and monitoring a resident at her house on School Street and when she went to take a picture of it, she was dive bombed by the unit several times. All agreed that this would be very helpful in regulating the use of this new technology.

**7. OTHER BUSINESS:** John Medeiros and Russ Hodgkins received information on a Windham Regional Commission sponsored seminar on “Floodplain Ordinances” and “Town Responsibility” in protecting our resources. The training will be held on September 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Marlboro Graduate Center in Brattleboro from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Russ Hodgkins explained that he is planning to attend and anyone interested in going also should tell him before Aug. 27<sup>th</sup>. John Medeiros showed interest but will tell Russ soon, for sure.

**8. DATE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING:** September 14, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. and the Public Hearing is on Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>.

**9. ADJOURNMENT: Chris Vincent moved to adjourn meeting at 8:15 pm. The motion was seconded by Matt Conklin and accepted by a 4-0-0 vote.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Prepared by: Russell R. Hodgkins - ZA