

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 25, 2005

Tracy Hall - Conference Room

Members Present: Daniel Johnson (Chair), Douglas Hoffman, Lynn McGrew, Alison McRee, Jeffrey Mathias, Stuart Richards, Ralph Hybels (arriving at 6:39)

Members Absent: Adele Fulton, Jaye Pershing Johnson

Staff: Philip Dechert

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:38 p.m.

1. Approve Agenda

Procedure: Motion by D. Hoffman to approve agenda. Second by S. Richards. Passed 6-0-0.

2. Comments from the Public – none

3. Announcements and Correspondence – none

4. Zoning Regulation Revisions

Discussion of April 2005 Revision Notes, began at page 13.

Action: D. Hoffman moved to accept Chris Katucki's recommendations regarding indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. S. Richards seconded. Passed 6-0-1 (R. Hybels abstained).

The remaining items on the Zoning Revision Notes were discussed, with no motions made or actions taken.

Expansion of the Village Residential District:

There was discussion of issues related to the potential expansion of the VR district to accommodate a plan to develop affordable housing on the former Agway property.

Village Buffer District

There was general discussion and consensus to discuss further at next meeting.

5. Survey

Action: Re: Question 13. S. Richards moved to add “in addition to private treatment facilities” to item 13c. There was no second.

Action: J. Mathias moved to approve Draft 5 as final. Second by A. McRee. D. Hoffman offered friendly amendment to change “Hamlet” to lower case “hamlet” in Q. 18, 19, 20. Friendly amendment accepted by A. McRee and J. Mathias. Motion passed unanimously.

Action: There was consensus to remove “5th Draft,” “Update,” and similar language from the survey instrument.

Action: Regarding the survey's cover letter, there was consensus to change the line “beginning to prepare the town plan” to “revising the town plan” based on J. Mathias's recommendation.

Action: J. Mathias moved (seconded by S. Richards) to have both a cover letter and a “fact sheet.” Failed 4-2-1 (For: S. Richards, L. McGrew, J. Mathias, D. Hoffman; Against: D. Johnson, R. Hybels; Abstaining: A. McRee).

Action: There was consensus to remove reference to P. Dechert's office in the cover letter as a place for townsfolk to obtain relevant documentation about town regulations, etc.

Action: Motion by J. Mathias to replace the first paragraph of J. Pershing-Johnson's latest draft cover letter with his version (e-mailed on 8/21/05), which was based on hers. Second by S Richards. Passed unanimous.

R. Hybels agreed to find out whether we can we have return address different from the address of addressee on return postage-paid envelopes. R. Hybels also said he'd check with the Post Office about all costs and issues that may be associated with this mailing, including whether the PO will accept drop-offs of survey or only those mailed in.

P. Dechert said cover letter should change to “on the town's website or town clerk's office” -- and he said he could put relevant books within easy reach there.

Discussion of survey cover letter, potential fact sheet, etc., will be resumed at the September 22 meeting, due to the expected absences of two PC members at the next meeting.

J. Mathias reported that he has completed a merge of the grand list and voting list, resulting in a total potential mailing list of more than 3,300 addressees. He said he has worked to eliminate duplicates.

There was discussion about the potential costs for data entry of the survey results (tabulation). Options include: volunteer work from planning commission members; Two Rivers, which had line-itemed the data entry with their response to the RFP; Temp agencies (S. Richards agreed to obtain quotes from those).

6. Old Business

Update regarding meeting about town and school tax rates as relates to development skipped as J. Pershing not in attendance.

Update regarding Open Space Subcommittee: D. Hoffman reported that they have had meetings and will meet again this coming Tuesday and expect to have their work completed by their assigned due date of approximately mid-October 2005.

Update from S. Richards regarding punch list with DRB – should get update from DRB-chair soon.

J. Mathias requested of Chair, D. Johnson, that punch list for DRB include an update of what is being done to record the municipal permits in the land records. D. Johnson responded that he would contact the Chair of the DRB (Watt Alexander) about this.

7. New Business

P. Dechert reported that Chapter 117 will require changes to the Norwich zoning regulations that automatically take effect, even if the Planning Commission hasn't made revisions to reflect them. He presented a document that listed things that will be affected. Most have already been implemented.

8. Minutes 8-11-05

Action: A. McRee moved and J. Mathias seconded the approval of the minutes from 8-11-05. Approved 5-0-2 (D. Hoffman and S. Richards abstained).

Consideration of minutes from the meeting previous to 8-11 still pending, but since they were not on this night's agenda, they will be considered at a later date.

9. Amendments to Planning Commission Bylaws

Action: Motion by J. Mathias to amend bylaws as per amendments noticed in the draft 8/11/05 minutes. Second S. Richards. Passed 7-0-0 [Note: required 2/3/ vote of PC membership.].

10. Future Agenda Items & Schedule

Thursday, September 8 - 6:30 PM Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 22 - 6:30 PM Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 29 - 6:30 PM Special Meeting - Taxes and Development

11. Comments from the Public - none

12. Meeting adjournment

Procedure: Motion by D. Hoffman to adjourn, seconded by A. McRee. Unanimous approval at approximately 9:45pm.

These minutes respectfully submitted by:
Ralph Cushman Hybels, Acting Scribe

Jeffrey D. Mathias, Clerk, Norwich Planning Commission

Approved: October 13, 2005