

**TOWN OF WARREN
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
SEPTEMBER 27, 2004**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Clayton Cormier, Chair, Don LaHaye, John Donaldson, Laura Crandall, Jim Sanford, John Goss

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Allen, GMNF, Steve Kimball, GMNF, Glenn Thomas, Conservation Committee, Karen Van Gilder, DRB/PC Assistant

AGENDA:

- 1) 7:00 pm Call to Order
- 2) Discussion of Proclamation Boundary Proposal
- 3) Town Plan Update
- 4) Other Business

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cormier called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

II. REVIEW MINUTES

This item was not on the agenda.

MOTION by Crandall, seconded by Goss, to approve the minutes from September 13, 2004. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

MOTION by Donaldson, seconded by Crandall, to approve the minutes from September 20, 2004, as amended. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

III. DISCUSSION OF PROCLAMATION BOUNDARY PROPOSAL

Cormier welcomed Kimball, Allen, and Thomas to the meeting and explained that the Planning Commission had asked them to attend to help the commission understand the proposal the Conservation Committee had recommended. Kimball stated that the process had started with Tara Hamilton, of the Conservation Committee, when he asked her to work with the Planning Commission to confirm or change the statements that are in the current Town Plan regarding the proclamation boundary. As he remembered it, these statements implied that the Town would encourage the GMNF to acquire more lands in Town and would encourage the GMNF to expand the proclamation boundary. He also stated that he had been told by his predecessor that at one time in the 1990s Warren, Fayston, Waitsfield, and Duxbury had thought about the idea of including their entire town area within the Proclamation Boundary. He asked the following questions:

1. Is the Planning Commission still interested in expanding the boundary?
2. Does the Planning Commission have any suggestions for how or where?
3. How does the Planning Commission feel about further acquisitions by the GMNF?

The GMNF is trying to purchase additional land at Blueberry Lake, but the 2004 appropriation language is making that difficult. Kimball stated that he has confidence that in 2005 the language will be more supportive.

Cormier stated that to answer Kimball's questions, the commission is willing to consider expansion of the boundary and that they looked to the Conservation Committee for advice on how and where. He stated that further acquisitions would be between the GMNF and the individual seller.

Thomas explained that the Conservation Commission had looked at the likelihood of the GMNF being interested in the land when they made their recommendation for the boundary, which does not include the northeastern corner of the Town. He stated that the Conservation Commission would not be against including the whole Town, but that the group had tried to pick the areas that would be most desirable to the GMNF.

Crandall asked whether there were any restrictions placed on the landowner within the Proclamation Boundary. Kimball stated that the boundary only gives GMNF the authority to purchase the property without an act of Congress. Cormier asked whether it would make sense to exclude the Village of Warren. Allen stated that if the whole town was included within the boundary that it would be easier to include the Village than to exclude it. He stated that it was not unusual to include village center areas, but that the GMNF was very unlikely to ever purchase any of it.

Kimball stated that GMNF is interested in purchasing contiguous lands and protecting watersheds. He also reminded the commission that GMNF is not obligated to get the Town's support when making purchases within the boundary, but that they do out of a matter of courtesy. He left two maps of proposed purchases for which he would like to receive Selectboard support.

Cormier asked if there was a make-up formula for taxes when these properties are purchased. Kimball stated that the Town would lose the taxes, but that there was a payment of \$1.50 per acre. Donaldson asked if the properties are in the current use program and confirmed from the Grand List that it appeared that the bulk of two of them were. Cormier suggested that the GMNF should produce an estimate on the loss of taxes and that the Selectboard might be interested in those numbers. Kimball stated that the GMNF usually does not go after high value land and that the properties in question do not have very good access. He added that the conservation value determines GMNF's interest.

Cormier asked Thomas to have the Conservation Committee reconsider including the whole town within the Proclamation Boundary. Cormier asked Van Gilder to contact Dee Pierce and request that Proclamation Boundaries be put on the MRVPD agenda.

IV. TOWN PLAN UPDATE

Van Gilder stated that she had nearly completed editing Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10. The remaining chapters require additional research and will take a little more time. Donaldson asked Van Gilder to email him the glossary from the zoning ordinance. The group decided that the latest opportunity to get any further comments on the above chapters to Van Gilder was within the week. The tentative schedule for completing the plan is as follows:

October 30 – Finish final draft and mail to interested parties
November 30 – Earliest public hearing date for Planning Commission
30 days after PC decision – Earliest public hearing date for Selectboard
Early January – Earliest date for completion of Public Hearing process

V. OTHER BUSINESS

These items were not on the agenda.

a. Landworks Invoice #98370

The contract with Landworks sets a not-to-exceed amount of \$13,000.00. This invoice would exceed that amount by \$174.46. Cormier signed the invoice and authorized the payment of \$986.79 to meet the maximum amount.

b. Minute taking

Don LaHaye contacted the Department of Corrections Community Service unit to inquire about having someone take minutes for the Planning Commission. The group felt that they would be willing to try the services once. The cost is \$10 for each meeting. The person the DOC had in mind has experience at transcription and would be available for 9 meetings. Cormier asked Goss to look into the status of the Planning Budget to see if the money could be located to pay for the service.

c. Town Plan Work

Cormier and Van Gilder reported that they had met with Steve Butcher and Michael Brodeur of the Selectboard and had come to an agreement that Van Gilder would be paid for work on the Town Plan above and beyond 32 hours of regular work as the DRB/PC Assistant at the same rate out of the Municipal Planning Grant money. The amount paid will not exceed \$1000.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Donaldson seconded by Sanford, to adjourn the meeting. VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Van Gilder
DRB/PC Assistant

PLANNING COMMISSION

Clayton Cormier (date)

John Donaldson (date)

Jim Sanford (date)

Laura Crandall (date)

Don LaHaye (date)

John Goss (date)